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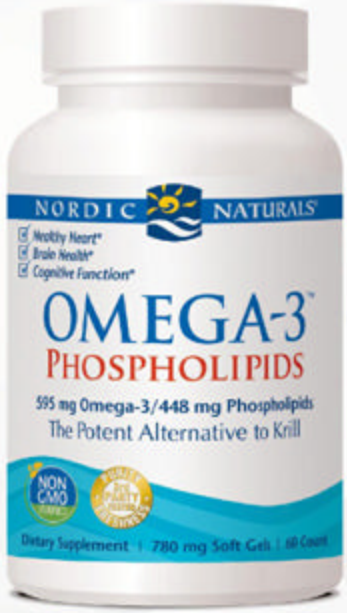
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"I'VE BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS THAT THE WORLD IS ONE BIG FAMILY."
—KRISTEN BELL

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ON THE COVER

Kristen Bell wears a Daniel Silverstein dress, A Peace Treaty earrings, Far & Wide Collective bracelets, Brilliant Earth diamond rings and a Wanderlust + Co ring. Get Bell's look with products from Neutrogena: Shine Control Liquid Makeup in Classic Ivory, Healthy Skin Smoothing Concealer in Fair, Healthy Skin Blends in Pure, Nourishing Eyeliner in Spiced Chocolate, Healthy Volume Mascara in Carbon Black, Nourishing Long Wear Eye Shadow + Built-in Primer in Cocoa Mauve and MoistureSmooth Color Stick in Sweet Watermelon.

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CLASSIC KRISTEN!

Check out online-only extras—including behind-the-scenes footage from our photo shoot with Bell—at **naturalhealthmag.com/kristen**.

EDITOR'S PICK

The **everclēn Sensitive Skin Gift Basket** includes six super-gentle products to keep your skin silky smooth all over through spring. Enter to win one (valued at $150) at **naturalhealthmag.com/edpick**.



GREEN UP MEALTIME



We're fans of the cauliflower tabbouleh from the new cookbook *Best Green Eats Ever* by Katrine Van Wyk. Get more nutrient-packed recipes at **naturalhealthmag.com/healthy-eating**.

Cauliflower Tabbouleh

SERVES 4

Finely chop 1 head **cauliflower** into grain-like pieces. Add cauliflower, 1 cup chopped **tomatoes** (about 2 medium), 1 cup chopped **English or Persian cucumber**, 1 cup chopped **green bell pepper**, 2 chopped **spring onions**, 1½ cups chopped **curly kale**, ½ cup finely chopped **parsley** and ½ cup finely chopped **mint** to a bowl; mix well. Drizzle in the juice of ½ **lemon**, 3 tablespoons **olive oil**, ¼ teaspoon **salt** and freshly **ground pepper** to taste. Mix well again and do a taste test. Add more lemon juice, salt or pepper if desired.

STAY IN TOUCH!

We want to know what you're loving in this issue and what you'd like to see more of. Tweet us **@_NaturalHealth**, follow us on Instagram **@naturalhealthmag**, like us on Facebook or email us at **letters@naturalhealthmag.com**.

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Happy birthday, Earth Day

WE'RE ENTHUSIASTIC upcyclers in our house. My husband uses pasta-sauce jars to hold batches of homemade pesto and pickles. Our 8-year-old son squirrels away found remnants—think empty cereal boxes and a disconcerting number of wine corks—down to our basement craft-/rec-/crazy-room to make quirky little gizmos and sculptures. I even bring shreds of paper down to our recycling bins to wait for the biweekly pickup. Being fastidious about recycling and reusing makes me hyperaware of just how much we consume. It's like that old diet tip about saving the wrappers from the candy you eat: When you're forced to live with your recyclables until they're picked up, or consider who could benefit from plastic toys your kids have outgrown, you can't just forget about trash the way you could if you tossed it in a pail. In fact, the more I recycle and reuse, the more I wonder how much time and space I'd save by simply not bringing as much stuff into our (built circa 1921, woefully storage-challenged) house to begin with. The answer, as I discovered in "Shrink Your Waste" on page 72: quite a lot! If you, too, are tired of contending with overflowing recycling bins and running around your house in a futile effort to declutter, the smart tips in this piece will help you find breathing room in your home, schedule and even your budget. They'll also, of course, help the planet. Americans generate more garbage than folks in any other country—each of us tosses more than 4 pounds of trash in landfills per day. Tiny tweaks can lighten that load.



While any day is a great day to make a mindful change, April 22 is the 45th anniversary of Earth Day, the annual effort to celebrate the planet and recommit to protecting it. In this issue, you'll find plenty of ways to do both. Steal green tips from our smart and hilarious cover star Kristen Bell (p. 12) as well as editor-at-large Evangeline Lilly (p. 40), eat real food that slims your body (p. 78) and ensure the water you're drinking is pure (p. 84). And don't miss our tribute to six guys who are using their star power to help the environment (p. 48). After all, you can tell a lot about a man by the way he treats his Mother Earth!

Laura

LAURA KALEHOFF
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Who came up with Earth Day anyway?

The late Julian Koenig—legendary ad copywriter and dad of *Serial* podcast host Sarah Koenig—was on the senatorial committee that founded Earth Day in 1969, and coined the name. April 22 was his birthday!

5 THINGS I LEARNED FROM THIS ISSUE

Daydreaming boosts your **short-term memory**. Now, where was I again? (p. 26)

An imbalance of bacteria in your digestive tract can **affect your emotions**—making you more prone to anxiety (p. 32).

Quinoa—now found in hair products—**locks in moisture** and strengthens strands (p. 58).

Bitter foods help you absorb vitamins A, D and E, and fight damaging free radicals (p. 78). Pass the Brussels sprouts!

The water out of your tap tends to be **more stringently tested** than bottled H_2O (p. 84).



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JAMES MICHELFELDER

LIFE CHANGER

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Anna Cummins, co-founder
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KRISTEN BELL
cooler than ever

Behind that megawatt smile is a fierce mama bear determined to build a safer, kinder world for herself, her daughters and her fellow man. And she'll do it all while cracking you up.

BY **SHAWNA MALCOM** \ PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JEFF LIPSKY** \ FASHION EDITOR: **CATHERINE PERIDIS**



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Kristen Bell arrives for breakfast at Stamp Proper Foods, a Los Angeles-area cafe, shortly after 9:45 on a Friday morning. Removing the helmet she wore while riding her bicycle from her nearby home, the 34-year-old actress places an order at the counter for tamales rancheros, her favorite item on the menu. Then she grabs a seat at a rustic wood table and offers up some saucy dish about Dax Shepard, her husband and father of her two daughters, Lincoln, 2, and newborn Delta, who arrived in December. "He often says he never thought he'd be surrounded by this many females," she says of the actor, who's now outnumbered 3-to-1 in the Bell-Shepard household, "while having so little sex."

The joke, while borrowed from her hubby, is classic Kristen: unfiltered and delivered with the precise comic timing she's famous for on-screen, whether playing wisecracking private eye Veronica Mars, ruthless management consultant Jeannie in Showtime's *House of Lies* or spunky, modern heroine Anna in Disney's *Frozen*. But while the Michigan native may have a winning sense of humor, she's serious about making healthy choices for herself and her family. Here, the whip-smart Bell—a vegetarian since age 10 and the face of Neutrogena Naturals skin care—fills us in on her clean diet, her mindful approach to her post-baby body and why her favorite role is undoubtedly Mom.

Previous page: **Maiyet** dress, $1,050, The Webster Miami; **A Peace Treaty** earrings, $230, apeacetreaty.com. This page: **Amour Vert** dress, $210, amourvert.com; **Karen Egren** black ring, $45, and diamond band rings, $45 each, karenegren.com; **Samilynn Jewelry** moon necklace, $785, samilynnjewelry.com; **Victoria Bekerman Studio** bangle, $130, victoriabekerman.com.

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Juan Carlos Obando
top, $1,100,
Barneys New York

NATURAL HEALTH: So how is everything with the new baby at home?
KRISTEN BELL: Blissful. Totally blissful. Right now I'm just focusing on creating a wonderful bond with her.

NH: How did your second pregnancy compare to your first?
KB: I gained a little less weight with this one. I think it's in part because I gave up sugar this time. Before I was pregnant, Dax and I gave up refined sugar for 30 days—cookies, brownies—and at the end, we went to the store and got the desserts we were craving. Then we pigged out and after about five minutes, we both felt like barfing. Like, "Oh, white sugar *is* toxic!" Since then we've just given it up in our household. And now an apple tastes mind-blowingly delicious.

NH: What's your diet like now?
KB: For breakfast, I'll either do Manna bread or Dave's Killer Bread and a humanely harvested egg or two with sea salt. For lunch or dinner, I make a lot of what I call garbage-disposal salads: I'll start with a grain, like bulgur, or a bean, like lentils or chickpeas, then add lettuce and any fruit, vegetable and nut I can find—strawberries, cucumbers, walnuts. Put an over-easy egg on top and break the yolk as the sauce—game over! I get a box from FarmBox LA every week with vegetables, eggs and some chicken breasts for when I cook for meat-eaters.

"I won't kill myself to look a certain way. And I won't ruin the first six months with my baby because I'm only eating lettuce."

NH: Wait—you cook chicken?
KB: It's from a farm right outside of L.A. called Mary's Free Range Chicken that is all but a [luxury spa] Burke Williams for the birds. It has the highest ratings of humane treatment. And when I cook it for people, they notice how different it tastes. The consensus is I make a damn good chicken breast, which is ironic. I really enjoy that FarmBox. They send me vegetables I've never even heard of!

NH: Like what?
KB: Tomatillos. I didn't really know what those were. And they exposed me to Swiss chard, which I then planted in my garden. I've learned to appreciate eating whatever is in season. If tomatoes aren't growing, maybe cool it on tomatoes. Mother Nature has a system. She rolls this way for a reason, you know?

NH: Definitely. Are you and Dax raising your daughters vegetarian?
KB: Nope. If they want to be, certainly

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I'll support that. But I'm exposing Lincoln to everything—healthy and within reason, of course. Our pediatrician said, "Give her everything you'd eat. Don't bland it down." So whatever we had—Chinese, Indian—we just made sure she could swallow it, and now she has an extreme palate. She likes curry and real briny stuff, like garlic and onions. She eats olive tapenade with a spoon. She's weird.

NH: After having Lincoln, you were vocal about taking all the time you needed to get back to your prepregnancy weight. Are you taking the same approach this go-round?
KB: Yeah. Part of it is just honest-to-goodness laziness. I'm not willing to kill myself to look a certain way. And I won't ruin the first six months of being with my baby because I'm only eating lettuce. It's also not healthy while you're breastfeeding, and I breastfeed like a champion.

"I let things unfold organically. For me, it's less about my circumstances and more about my perspective: Have a good attitude and you'll enjoy your life."

NH: Was it easier to watch your body change with the second pregnancy?
KB: It was more fun because we knew what was coming, and we knew the result: the baby. I was doing something extraordinary. It's a magical process. Plus, my husband likes me chubby.

NH: What's your post-baby workout routine like?
KB: My philosophy has been: One day a week, I'm not going to give into the fatigue. Every other day I might rest, but once a week, I'll get off my ass and ride my bike even though I'm tired. When I was pregnant, I'd do water aerobics with a few other pregnant girlfriends. We'd have these silly little dumbbells and huge Jackie O glasses and visors. It was hilarious. I felt like, just for the heck of it, we should've pulled out Virginia Slims afterward, pretended it was the '60s.

NH: You'd have people reporting you to the cops immediately!
KB: Right? But whatever exercise I do, my one rule is that I never work out in the evening. That time is for me, hubby and babies—always.

NH: Let's talk fashion—are you eco-conscious with your clothes?
KB: I try to be. I like a company called Out of Print, which isn't necessarily eco-conscious, but it's certainly ethically conscious. They do prints of old, cool books like *Animal Farm* and *Slaughterhouse-Five*, and for each T-shirt purchased, they donate a book to an African community. It's very cool.

NH: Since becoming a mom, have you become more focused on giving back?
KB: I've become more conscious that the world is one big family, you know? The older I get, the more I realize all these boundaries we've made with race, gender, city and country, it's all bullsh*t.

NH: We're all in it together.
KB: Exactly! So I try to make decisions that benefit the most people. If I can buy Yoobi desk supplies and then school supplies go to a school in need, or buy a This Bar Saves Lives and a life-saving nutritional packet is sent to someone who needs it, then obviously that's what I'll do. *Obviously.*

NH: You've been instrumental in the No Kids Policy [a campaign to stop paparazzi from photographing celebs' children], too. Had you thought about the issue before you were a parent?
KB: It took being directly affected for me to get angry. The first months of carting a baby around, it was unnerving to be followed by strangers. And the recognition that that would be

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the Real Way to do Sweet!™



Agave Scones

3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
5 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup unsalted butter, cold
1 egg
1/2 cup Domino® or C&H® Organic Blue Agave Nectar Syrup
1 cup milk
1 cup dried cranberries or raisins

Preheat oven to 400°F. Lightly grease a baking sheet and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a smaller bowl, mix egg, Agave Nectar and milk; stir into flour mixture until moistened. Do not over mix.

Turn dough onto lightly floured surface and knead until smooth. Knead in cranberries or raisins until just combined. Roll dough into a 1/2-inch disk and cut into 8 wedges. Place on prepared baking sheet. Bake approximately 15 minutes or until golden brown and a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Remove from oven. Place scones on wire rack to cool.

Makes 8 scones.

For the Agave Apple Butter recipe, and more information, visit **dominoagave.com** or **chagave.com**.

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Daniel Silverstein dress, $265, danielsilverstein.us; **A Peace Treaty** earrings, $230, apeacetreaty.com; **Anahita** V-ring, $536, anahitajewelry.com; **Wanderlust + Co** open weave ring, $29, wanderlustandco.com.

transferred to Lincoln was unacceptable. What if she doesn't want to be in the public eye? What if she wants to be a hermit and live in Fargo and play guitar and cook beans out of a pot? I'll support whatever my daughters want to do, so I better set up a scenario where they have options.

NH: Spoken like a great mom. What's surprised you most about motherhood?
KB: How cool of a job it really is. Before we had kids, I'd say to Dax, "I don't want to be like those people." I saw a few parents I didn't envy and was terrified I'd become crotchety and close-minded like them. And he said, "Those people had bad personalities *before* they had kids." Which is maybe the best point ever made. I was like, "You're right! And we're fun, so let's stay fun." Even though my life has changed drastically, I've been surprised how little it's changed me.

NH: Are you where you thought you'd be today? And what's next?
KB: I am where I thought I'd be, but I didn't put too much effort into getting here. I let it unfold organically, and I hope to do that with the next five years. Maybe I'll be in the exact same spot. Maybe I'll be a stay-at-home mom. Maybe I'll have had five more kids. For me, it's less about my circumstances and more about my perspective: Have a good attitude and you'll enjoy your life.

NH: Do you really want five more kids?
KB: No, I don't want to be outnumbered! I think we're stopping at two. I'm not even sharing a *soda* with Dax until he gets his tubes tied! ◆

bell's tips for natural beauty

You wouldn't know it from her glow, but Bell has battled eczema and hyperpigmentation—so she loves gentle products. But she knows she's lucky to live in L.A., where she can nab pure goods: "It's great to have someone in Beverly Hills making deodorant in her kitchen, but what good does that do when she only sells to a hundred people?" That's why Bell's a brand ambassador for Neutrogena Naturals. "A line without phthalates, parabens or sulfates that my family in the Midwest can buy at a drugstore—that's huge," she says. "I'd love to say, 'Let's all go outside and smear mud on our faces,' but it's not realistic. People everywhere need access to responsible products." To get pretty the Bell way, try her fave buys and tips.

HOMEMADE BODY SCRUB

"I mix brown sugar, honey and coconut oil. You feel good about what's going on your skin and down the drain. And you smell like a delicious Mai Tai afterward!"

PURE FACE WIPES

"**Neutrogena Naturals Purifying Makeup Remover Cleansing Towelettes** ($7, neutrogenanaturals.com) are my new obsession. I have them stashed everywhere."

A NATURAL DEODORANT

"I've made an effort not to use aluminum deodorant, so I found one on Etsy called **Fat and the Moon Deodorant Cream** ($12, fatandthemoon.com). It's coconut oil, baking soda, arrowroot starch, beeswax and essential oils. I love it."

WIN IT! We're giving five lucky readers the entire Neutrogena Naturals line. Enter to win a beauty gift set at **naturalhealthmag.com/deals**.

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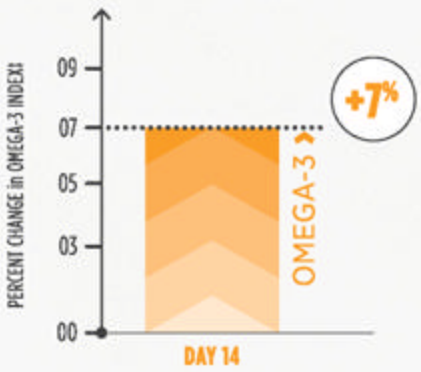
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NEWS & TIPS FOR FEELING YOUR BEST



LOOK OUT FOR YOUR LIVER BY GUZZLING SOME BREW.

JONATHON KAMBOURIS/GALLERY STOCK

COFFEE PERK

Even decaf drinkers can reap java's benefits. The nutrients in your morning cup—not the caffeine itself—have a positive effect on liver health, according to new research in *Hepatology*. Study authors believe compounds in the beverage may play a role in detoxification, which helps prevent liver damage. People who consumed three or more cups o' joe per day (caffeinated or not) had 40 percent lower levels of the enzymes associated with liver disease than those who didn't drink any coffee. That's the buzz!

BY T.K. BRADY



Want to boost your immunity? Extend that make-out sesh.

GIVE COLDS THE KISS-OFF

A 10-second kiss could transfer up to 80 million bacteria strains between partners, according to a recent study in *Microbiome*. But don't worry, that's a good thing! Snagging at least nine leisurely kisses per day exposes you to a wide range of new bacteria, which may keep you from getting sick, study authors speculate. How muah-velous!

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DAYDREAM BELIEVER

Go ahead and let your mind wander back to last year's vacation while you're at work. New research from Cornell University published in the *Journal of Neuroscience* found that reminiscing about old times could actually improve your short-term memory. When the small group of study participants were asked to recall famous faces, thus engaging their long-term memory, they performed recollection tasks more quickly and with better accuracy than when asked to recall faces they had just seen. Researchers suspect that engaging your brain's long-term memory center might actually boost the working-memory region, not draw away your focus. So dream on!



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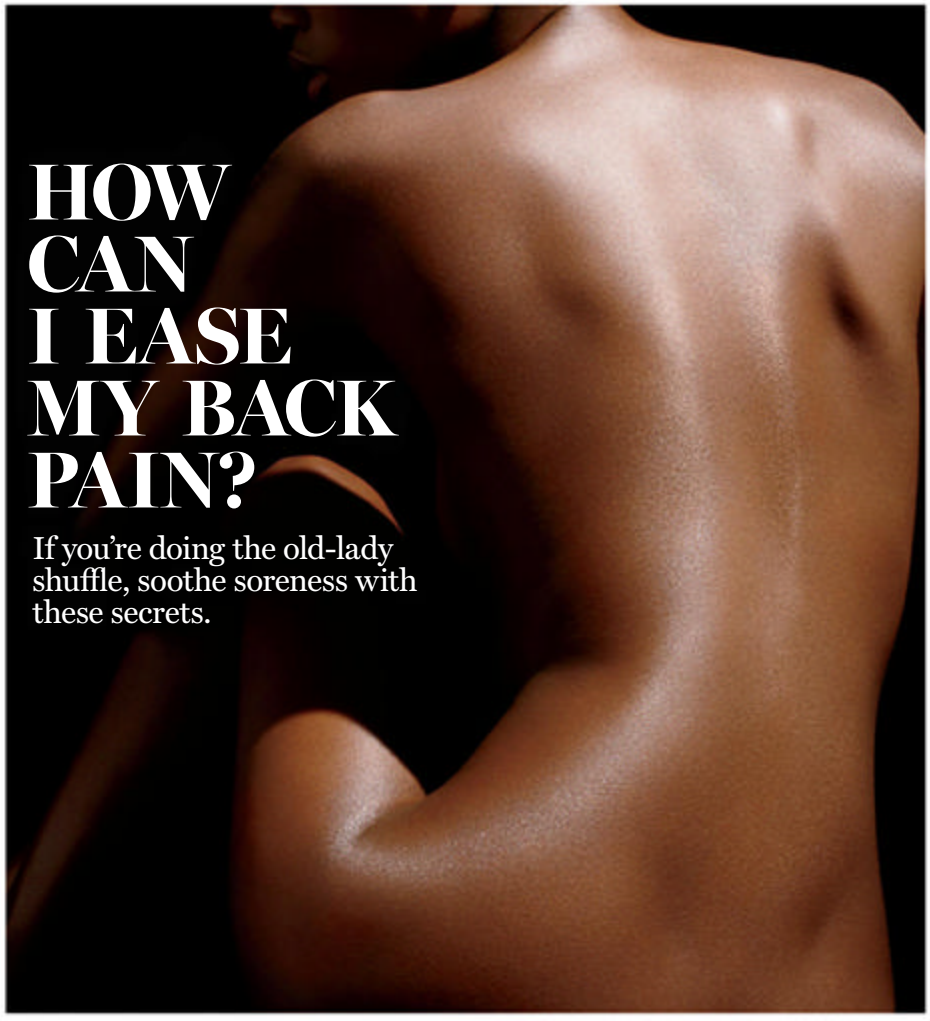
[1]Scientific research suggests people taking kelp fiber (sodium alginate) reduced their appetite for hours after a meal.
[2]Average weight loss with the key ingredient (200mg of green coffee bean extract) is 10.95 lbs. in a 60-day study with a low-calorie diet, and 3.7 lbs. in a separate 8-week study with a calorie-reduced diet and moderate exercise.

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HYDROXYCUT®



HOW CAN I EASE MY BACK PAIN?

If you're doing the old-lady shuffle, soothe soreness with these secrets.

A SPINAL SURGEON SAYS

Back problems often begin with an ache in the neck or lower back muscles caused by a tear in the fibers that wrap around your discs. Left untreated, a tear can worsen, resulting in more severe issues.

TREATMENT TO TRY

An MRI scan can identify the nerve that's irritating you. A physician may then use trigger point injections (a shot of a local anesthetic) or prescribe anti-inflammatories, which decrease pain. To relieve your spine, avoid bending, lifting, twisting and reaching and apply heat and ice packs as necessary. Also see a physical therapist, who can teach you how to stabilize and strengthen your lower back and improve your posture. Practice deep breathing, since it gives mobility to the spinal nerves: Place your hands on your abs and feel your belly move as you inhale and exhale.
—Kenneth K. Hansraj, M.D., spinal and orthopedic surgeon in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and author of Keys to an Amazing Life: Secrets of the Cervical Spine

A YOGA INSTRUCTOR SAYS

Accumulated stress from hunching at a computer or carrying heavy bags can wreak havoc on your spine and the muscles around it. Strengthening and stretching exercises relieve soreness by supporting the back.

TREATMENT TO TRY

A regular fitness routine of lunges, squats and planks helps maintain a strong core, which keeps your spine in alignment. Attend yoga classes with "restorative" or "yin" in the title at least once a week, as restorative poses that are done with props release tension from your muscles. Poses that open the hamstrings, such as a forward fold or supine Pigeon Pose, will also bring relief, since tightness in the back of your legs can pull on your back. Try a MELT Method class—you'll learn a neurofascial technique that decompresses your joints using foam rollers, relieving spinal tension. Book a massage, too; it will stimulate blood circulation in your back muscles, making them less stiff.
—Danielle Lee, certified yoga and MELT Method instructor at New York Health & Racquet Club in New York City

AN ACUPUNCTURIST SAYS

A main culprit of back pain is sitting, which weakens the core and stresses the spine. Acupuncture loosens muscles and increases blood flow.

TREATMENT TO TRY

An acupuncturist will insert needles into the painful area and reflexively responsive areas on your hands and feet; this relaxes muscles and creates space for discs. Augment your therapy with meditation and daily stretching. Inflammation-fighting supplements, such as omega-3 fatty acids (like **Vitafusion Omega-3 EPA/DHA**, $12, Target stores) and curcumin (like **Life Extension Super Bio-Curcumin,** $38, lifeextension.com), also help.
—Don Lee, L.Ac., licensed acupuncturist in Santa Monica, Calif.

ILAN RUBIN/TRUNK ARCHIVE

BY EMILY C. JOHNSON



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WORK(OUT) OF ART

Still stuck in black capris? Freshen up your palette with eco-friendly fitness picks in on-trend painterly prints.



1 STROKE OF GENIUS
The high neckline keeps you covered—even in Cat-Cow—with a stretchy blend of recycled and organic materials. (Move by Alternative, $58, alternativeapparel.com)

2 LEGS FOR DAYS
Show off toned stems in these tie-dye shorts, crafted at a solar-powered factory using soy pigments. (Gypsy05, $60, gypsy05.com)

3 TOP SPLOTCH
If feeling sleek keeps you motivated, you'll love these capris' wide waistband. Also cool: the responsibly sourced fabric. (Ellie, $65, ellie.com)

4 ZIP CODE
This chic watercolor topper is printed with nontoxic chemicals. (Prismsport, $98, prismsport.com)

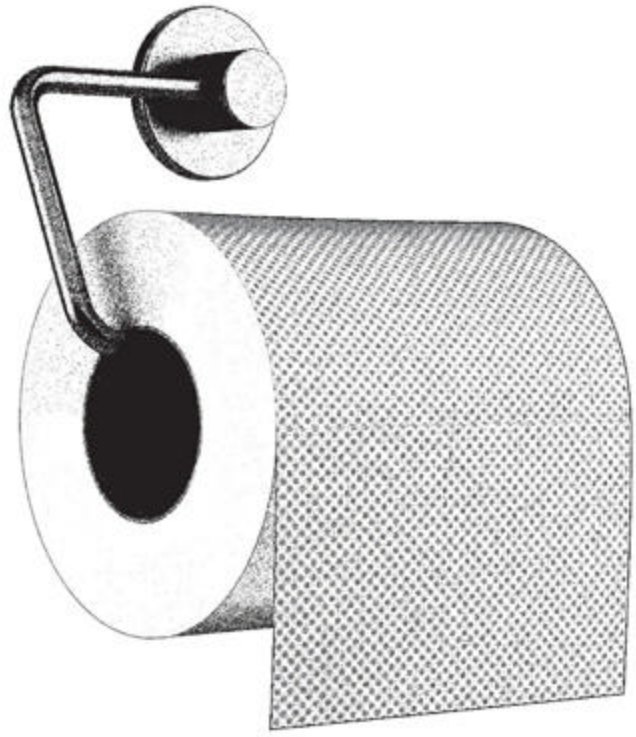
5 FUTURE PERFECT
These abstract, made-in-the-USA capris pair just right with a black top *or* a bright one. (Koral Activewear, $110, saksfifthavenue.com)

6 OFF TO THE RACES
This bra's flexible-but-strong support (made from recycled plastic bottles!) also boasts breathability. Comfort during Bikram: achieved. (Cozy Orange, $38, cozyorange.com)

7 THINK TANK
Score a so-hot layered look with this racerback top, made in Los Angeles. (Vimmia, $98, vimmia.com)

LISA SHIN; FASHION EDITOR: CATHERINE PERIDIS

BY ANNA MALTBY



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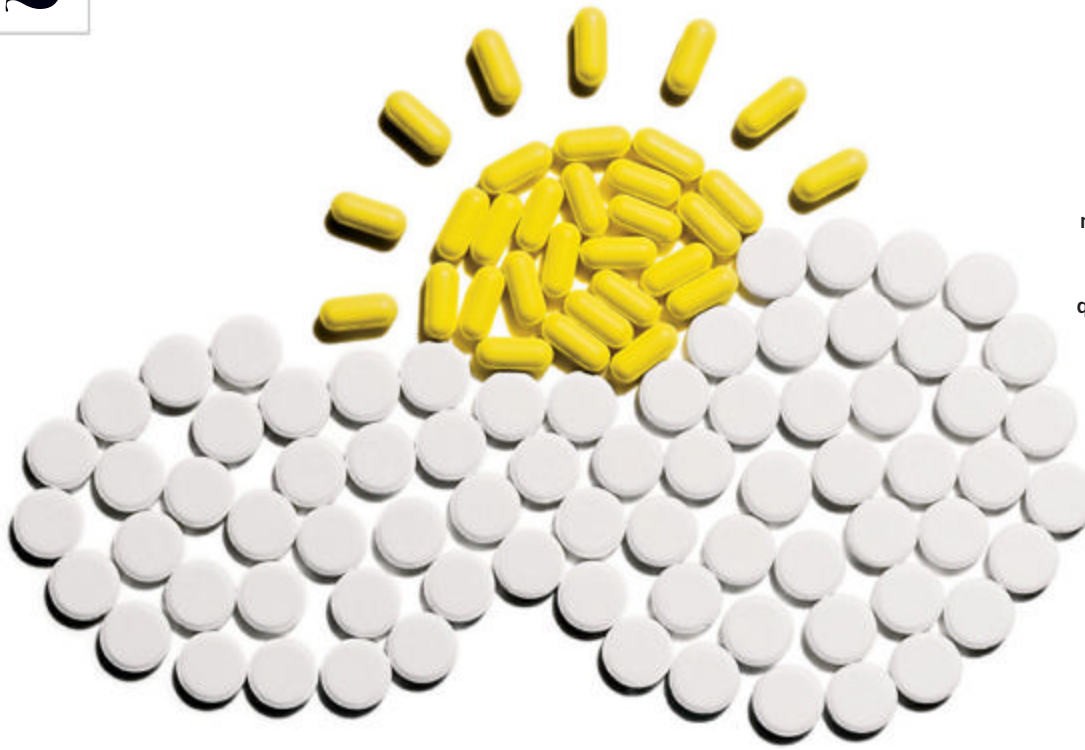
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A healthy mix of good bacteria in your belly can help quell stress.

ARE PROBIOTICS THE NEW ANTIDEPRESSANT?

Intriguing new research shows the key to easing anxiety and worry may be in your stomach.

"PROBIOTICS" HAVE BECOME BIG news lately, touted in medical journals and on morning shows alike as the natural cure for digestion and skin troubles, obesity and more. But recent research into the belly-dwelling bacteria should make you smile—literally. Studies have shown that probiotics may soon be an important player in the treatment of anxiety and depression. These beneficial bugs even have a trendy name: psychobiotics.

The brain-gut connection is nothing new. As anyone who's ever felt their stomach churn when angsting over a credit card bill or had to run to the bathroom before an important interview knows, mental stress can wreak havoc on your GI tract. But scientists have gleaned a powerful revelation from watching mice (and a few willing people) in the lab: The brain-to-belly highway runs in the other direction, too. If you don't have the correct balance of good and bad bacteria in your digestive tract (where tens of trillions of bacteria make up the microbiome), it can quite literally stress you out—bringing on anxious, despondent, even obsessive-compulsive behavior.

Enter probiotics, particularly two strains (*Lactobacillus helveticus* and *Bifidobacterium*, if you want to get med-school-specific) that have been shown to boost mood and temperament when introduced into the gut. "In animal studies, there's a lot of evidence that probiotics can normalize anxiety and depressive-like behaviors," says Jane Foster, Ph.D., associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral neuroscience at McMaster University in Ontario. A handful of small studies on humans seem to confirm the findings. In one, brain imaging showed that a group of women who drank fermented milk enriched with psychobiotics for four weeks reacted more calmly to stressful tasks. In another, volunteers saw reductions in depression and anxiety after taking a combination of the psychobiotic strains for 30 days.

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON PSYCHOBIOTICS

How can microscopic bacteria in your belly wield such power over your emotions? It starts in infancy: Bacteria are crucial to brain growth, and may influence the development of regions that tell a baby's body how to respond to stress, Foster explains. But even when you're a fully formed adult,

TOM SCHIERLITZ/TRUNK ARCHIVE

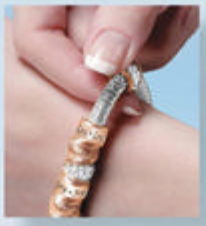
BY MELISSA WALKER

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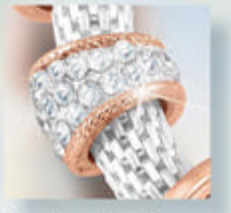
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the microorganisms in your gut are still communicating with your brain, possibly via the vagus nerve, which runs from your brain stem to your digestive tract. It's believed that certain bacteria stimulate the nerve to regulate neurotransmitters—brain chemicals that affect your thoughts and feelings.

Two brain chemicals that are particularly key for mental well-being are cortisol and gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), and scientists are now working to determine the relationship between the production of those neurochemicals and probiotics. Cortisol is considered the "stress hormone," and elevated levels are often seen in people suffering from major depression. "A microbiome that's heavy in good bacteria lowers cortisol levels," says Phil Burnet, Ph.D., director of graduate studies for psychiatry at the University of Oxford, who is working on a human-based study about the effects of prebiotics (the foods that probiotics thrive on) on mood. Other studies have shown psychobiotics can spur the production of GABA, which washes the body in a feel-good, calming vibe. And some research suggests that probiotics tell the brain to produce and secrete serotonin and oxytocin, which make you feel relaxed and happy.

None of this surprises James Greenblatt, M.D., a psychiatrist and chief medical officer at Waltham Behavioral Care near Boston, who has been treating psychiatric patients with probiotic therapy for 20 years. "I'm excited that research is now focusing on this area," he says. But he's quick to point out that psychobiotics are not a quick cure-all for someone who's simply feeling blue. "I test my patients for dysbiosis [an imbalance in their internal bacteria] first, by using a urine test to look for certain chemicals produced by 'bad' bacteria and yeast in the gut," Greenblatt says. It's patients who test positive—who've often had their bacteria levels disrupted by overuse of antibiotics—who see their symptoms improve after a course of multi-strain, high-dose probiotics, he says, adding that it takes one to two months to see an effect.

THE FUTURE OF BACTERIA THERAPY

Research scientists are still working to figure out how to harness psychobiotics' abilities, but the research is firm that gut feelings are real. And if you're suffering emotionally due to a bacteria imbalance—particularly after a course of antibiotics—supplements seem like a promising treatment. But we're still a ways off from being able to chug down a probiotic shake to ward off a case of the doldrums.

In the meantime, keep this in mind: "Probiotics are safe and the microbiome is an important part of health," Greenblatt says, so loading up on good bacteria certainly couldn't hurt. Fermented foods like kefir, sauerkraut and yogurt are great sources of probiotics, and eating a prebiotic diet of fruits, vegetables and whole grains helps the healthy bugs do their job even better. It's impossible to know how much you're benefiting from a hefty side of kimchi, so if you want a probiotic-rich microbiome, consider taking a daily supplement.

Probiotics may not be a pop-one-to-feel-peppy pill, but they can help keep you healthy—and that's certainly key to a happy life. ◆



Certain strains of probiotics can help create that life-is-grand feeling.

TOM SCHIERLITZ/TRUNK ARCHIVE

PICK THE RIGHT PROBIOTIC SUPPLEMENT

Lona Sandon, R.D., assistant professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas has tips for choosing one—whether you're targeting your mood or hoping to regulate your digestion.

- Choose a supplement with an enteric coating (usually made of wax or plant fibers) so the bugs are protected and can survive past your stomach acid.
- Make sure the label says it has "live active cultures," and reach for the one with the highest amount (10 billion CFUs or more), as some will be killed off in the digestive tract before making it to the large intestine.
- Check the expiration date; the longer the package sits on the shelf, the fewer live cultures will be left in the pills.
- If you don't notice an improvement after a few weeks, try another brand.

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home & away

CREATE AN INVITING WORLD



In Amsterdam and other Dutch cities, it's common for homes not to have any curtains.

A ROOM WITH A VIEW

Take down your drapes for a whole new outlook: Foregoing window treatments can have a positive effect on your state of mind. "Watching outdoor scenes unfold from your window may help you feel emotionally connected to nature," says Toby Israel, Ph.D., a design psychologist. Sure, passersby may be able to snag a peek of you sipping coffee, but you get a never-ending stream of living art, like goldfinches in the trees or a peach-smudged dusk descending on the city. Try it in just one spot with the best view to start, Israel says. Oh, what a sight!

MOLLY CRANNA

BY ANDREA STANLEY

FINDS OF FANCY

We scoured the globe from Oregon to Africa to find these authentic additions to your home—wherever it may be.



GLOW ON

The **City 7 Chandelier** looks like a bouquet of about-to-bloom daisies. Each one is handcrafted in Oregon. ($229, schoolhouseelectric.com)



SOFT SPOT

The fabric of the **Proud Mary x Max + Clementine Corded Pillow** is printed using traditional mud cloth techniques via a cooperative of craftspeople in West Africa, providing locals with fair-wage jobs. ($172, proudmary.org)

FAIR CLAY

Shaped and glazed by hand, the **VitrifiedStudio Spice Bottle Set** is lead-free. Choose the seasoning names you want stamped on for a dash of personalization. ($100 for set of five, vitrifiedstudio.com)



LIVE BETTER NOW

If you're using an unscented cleaner, you may never feel like your home is truly tidy. "Smells, especially essences like citrus, are powerful cues of cleanliness," says Pamela Dalton, Ph.D., an olfactory scientist at the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia. Help non-perfumed formula pass the sniff test: After wrapping up a deep scrub, wipe a half-cut lemon across your countertop for a zesty, fresh finish.



SERVES YOU RIGHT

The **Kuni Bowl**, carved from locally sourced olive wood, proves a lovely nest for your seasonal fruit. Even more beautiful: It gives Kenyan craftswomen—some of whom might have otherwise been forced into prostitution—a way to provide for their families. ($32, badala.org)

DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

Brazilian artisans turn gems into exquisite home goods, like this **Lia Bottle Stopper**. The topper's brilliant stones are available in shades such as Rose Quartz and Emerald. ($64, rablabs.com)



BY ANDREA STANLEY

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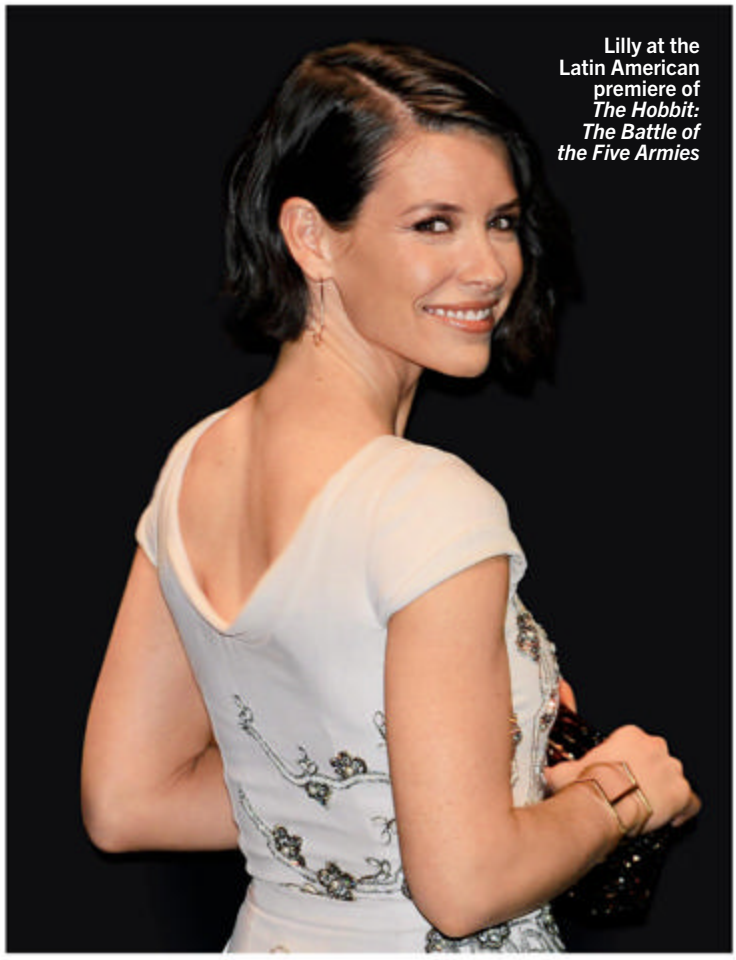
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SMALL CHANGES, BIG IMPACT

Actress and *Natural Health* editor-at-large **Evangeline Lilly** on the little moves you can make to better the world



Lilly at the Latin American premiere of *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*

Saving the planet is a tall order. When it comes to reducing waste, preventing pollution and eliminating all that's toxic to nature, can one person really make an impact? And even if she can, does she have the *time* to make an impact? Let's be realistic: The world is an awfully big place.

The first thing I would recommend is to stop trying to save *the whole planet*. Feeling responsible for the entire Earth often leaves people too overwhelmed to do anything at all. Instead, think about how you can contribute to change in your city, town or neighborhood, or even just on your street. These little gestures may seem like nothing when you think about the grand goal, but the sum of our modest actions truly has the power to transform the world. Here are three of my favorite ways to think green on the small-scale.

Tweak your thermostat

Did you know that household heating accounts for about 55 percent of Americans' annual energy bill? That's a lot of natural gas being burned up and releasing harmful CO_2 into the atmosphere. Inching your thermostat down just 2 degrees in winter and up 2 degrees in summer could nix about 1,000 pounds of CO_2 a year, according to the Environmental Defense Fund. This means that the average person can have a dramatic effect on climate change just by adjusting the dial.

Have a voice in local government

Getting involved in local politics—be it running for office, lobbying politicians or simply voting in your municipal elections—is a powerful way to create a greener neighborhood. Just think: You could help revise your town's recycling policies or start a bike-share program on your block.

Engage your community

In Tim Flannery's book *The Weather Makers*, I read about a group of parents in Germany who, concerned about lingering pollution from Chernobyl and determined to make a better future for their kids, raised enough money (a sum equivalent to nearly $2.5 million!) to outbid the local nuclear plant and take over the grid. Using hydropower, solar panels and wind turbines, their grassroots company now generates electricity for nearly 1 million homes in Europe. They literally and figuratively took power into their own hands—an inspiring example of how a small collective can create big change. For your own home, check out Mosaic, a smart company that'll help you get a loan to install solar panels (joinmosaic.com).

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- ½ cup ice
- ½ cup fresh or frozen strawberries
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SHELTER FALLOUT

Millions of adoptable animals miss out on perfectly suitable homes each year, for no good reason. Experts blame red tape. Is switching up the application process the solution? *Natural Health* investigates.

WITH A NEW HUSBAND, an airy house in Livingston, N.J., and a big yard, Brittany Helm assumed she was the ideal candidate to adopt a dog. Helm called shelters looking for Siberian huskies like the ones she'd grown up with, confident that her home—only 10 minutes from her husband's work and sans potentially pestering small children—would be a wonderful place for a pup in need of love and stability. But her mission came to a halt when her applications were met with a flurry of rejections.

Husky rescues picked apart the Helms' apps, finding fault with the couple for working full-time and not fencing in their yard, and criticizing them for a lack of experience with the breed or detailed knowledge of ailments like heartworm. When Helm pushed back, noting a childhood spent caring for huskies and promising to build a fence, hire a dog walker, study up—the answer was still no. "I felt like they were setting us up to fail," Helm recalls.

After endless interrogations but still no pet, the couple was ready to give up. But they tried one last place: Mt. Pleasant Animal Shelter, in East Hanover, N.J. After meeting with an adoption consultant, the Helms took home Bo, a black Labrador mix, who, despite not being a husky, won their hearts. And the Helms fit the rescue's bill, too. "They were great candidates," says Rebecca Pollak, community relations coordinator at the shelter. "They were willing to train him and are an active couple, which was a perfect fit for Bo. We couldn't have asked for a better adoptive family."

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

The Helms' situation is not unique. Plenty of seemingly ideal adopters all over the U.S. get rejected for trivial reasons, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Yet, of the 7.6 million companion animals that enter shelters each year, only a little over one-third are adopted. Just as many are left in shelters or worse, euthanized. Nearly 17 million American households welcome a new dog or cat annually, according to The Humane Society of the United States. If only *one-sixth* of those homes got a pet from a shelter instead of a breeder, no healthy, adoptable dog or cat would have to be put down.

The ASPCA blames rigid application processes—like those Helm experienced—for creating unnecessary stumbling blocks for potential owners. Policy-based applications, which require adopters to meet an unforgiving set of qualifications, can decrease adoptions, according to a recent study in the *Open Journal of Animal Sciences*. Meanwhile, owners who adopt using conversation-based applications, which don't have stringent requirements or demand information like household income, are just as likely to bond with their pet and give it a good home, the study notes.

Conversation-based adoptions focus on open-ended questions, such as, "It's most important to me that my pet fill-in-the-blank," explains study author Emily Weiss, Ph.D., vice president of shelter research and development for the ASPCA. The answer could be anything from "goes running with me" to "sits on



Love the pups on these pages? They're all former shelter dogs that have been adopted!

SHAINA FISHMAN

BY JULIA DENNISON

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my lap," and shelters match applicants with appropriate pets.

The ASPCA is leading a nationwide movement to encourage rescues and shelters to take this holistic angle. "Shelter workers see animals that have been treated cruelly, and want to prevent that by keeping them in shelters and using black-and-white application criteria," Weiss says. "But we respectfully disagree with that approach. Getting an animal into a good home is the best thing we can do for that pet."

FINDING YOUR FURRY BFF

The ASPCA's campaign is working: Conversation-based adoptions are quickly growing in popularity. If you're considering a new pet, call your local shelter. Ask about their requirements and you'll get a feel for how they operate. If administrators appear inflexible (e.g., they say a fenced-in yard is an absolute necessity), move on to another rescue that will engage in a dialogue with you. And don't be discouraged if your application is initially rejected. "I have a Ph.D. in animal behavior, and even *I've* been told that I couldn't adopt a dog," Weiss says. If you meet the love of your life at a shelter with strict policies, see "Ace the Application Process" at right to put your best foot forward. If the organization won't budge, don't take it personally; it may have nothing to do with you (Helm was convinced one husky rescue wanted to hold onto a favorite dog), and it's their prerogative to make that call.

If you've postponed adopting a pet just because you think you'll get rejected, reconsider. Characteristics that on paper you might assume would lead to a rejection could actually make you a better owner. For example, not having a yard could mean a pup is more likely to be taken for walks and socialized at dog parks, Weiss points out. If you head to an office each day, you could adopt a less active pup that appreciates alone time.

Above all else, be honest. You're the best judge of whether a pet is the right choice. Good luck!

ACE THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Here's how to scoot your family's adoption petition to the top of the pile.

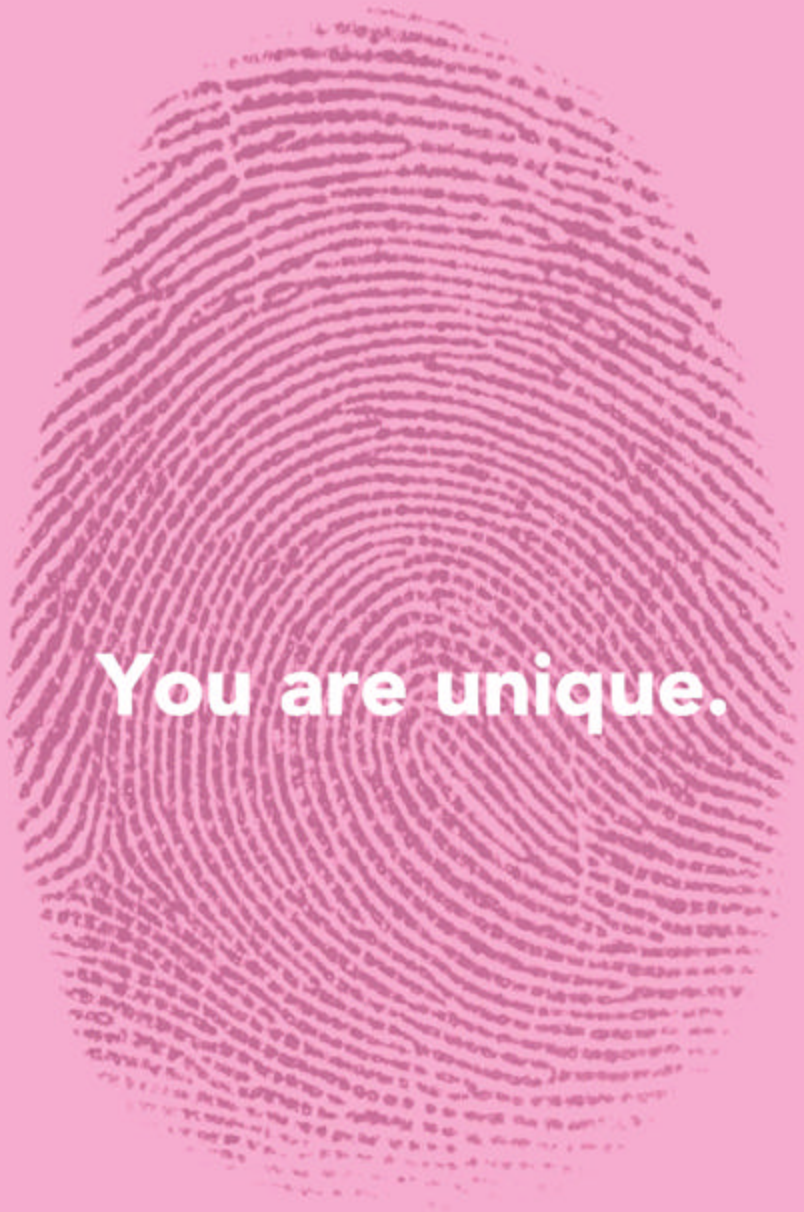
1. Consider why you want a pet Emily Weiss, Ph.D., vice president of shelter research and development at the ASPCA, recommends picturing your ideal pet relationship. Are you tossing a ball? Is he curled up as you read? "Communicating what's important helps the shelter find your match," she says.

2. Have your answers ready Even with a conversation-based application, you'll very likely face questions like: What will you do with the dog while you're at work? How will you discipline your dog? If you rent, do you have your landlord's permission to have a pet? Do you have allergies? While these may not all be deal-breakers, you should give them serious thought beforehand and be prepared to explain anything that could raise a red flag.

3. Live a pet owner's life *now* Planning to make changes to accommodate your new arrival? Start before the adoption process—and communicate that commitment to the rescue organization, says Jillian Dunn, executive director of the Cesar Millan Foundation. If you're not a morning person, start getting up a little earlier in the weeks leading up to the adoption, she suggests. Or try taking a walk at a time you'll walk your dog so you know you can adapt. You'll be well-trained by the time your pup arrives!



SHAINA FISHMAN

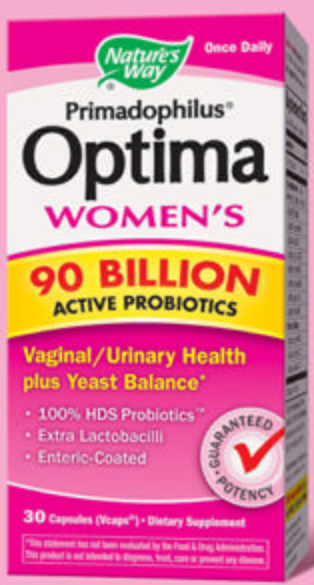


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Maui

Say aloha to the chilled-out, health-conscious vibe of Hawaii's second-largest island.

BY **ILIMA LOOMIS**

1 OUT AT SEA

Hop in a tour boat to snorkel or dive the crescent-shaped **Molokini Crater**, a marine preserve teeming with fish such as the endemic humuhumunukunukuapua'a. You're also likely to spy the humpback whales that wintered in nearby warm, protected waters—and hear their haunting underwater calls. (molokinicrater.com)

2 BUZZWORTHY

Sample shots of house-brewed "booch" in flavors like lilikoi (passion fruit) and ginger-lime before ordering a full jar at **Maui Kombucha**. Beyond bubbly probiotics, the cafe features a rotating raw, vegan menu. Breakfast on the epic Immortality Acai Bowl, made with fresh coconut and bee pollen. (mauikombucha.com)

3 HIT RESET

The **Lumeria Maui** boutique hotel and retreat center offers daily yoga, a meditation room and horticulture classes in the on-site native garden. Dine on farm-to-table offerings or detox with house-made juices, broths and teas. (from $329; lumeriamaui.com)

4 ISLAND BLISS

The serene **Ho'omana Spa** incorporates ancient, indigenous healing techniques and locally sourced ingredients, like Hawaiian clay and fresh medicinal plants, in therapies such as lomi lomi massage (think long strokes with forearms) and back walking. (hoomanaspamaui.com)

5

PEAK EXPERIENCE

Skip the hordes at dawn and make your pilgrimage to the summit area of **Haleakalā National Park** for a spectacular sunset and some amateur astronomy: Clear skies make this 10,000-foot dormant volcano among the best spots in the world for contemplating the star-studded heavens. (nps.gov/hale)

6

RAD TRIP

Take an awesome scenic drive along the rainforested Hana Highway to reach pristine **Hamoa Beach**, a sparkling, salt-and-pepper sand cove. Spot endangered monk seals and watch experienced surfers catch gnarly waves as you soak up some rays. (hamoabeach.org)

7

KEEP IT GROWING

Restored by a nonprofit group, the historical **Kipahulu** farming fields are once again producing traditional crops such as taro and breadfruit. Explore the terrain on a guided walk that also highlights the remote region's Jurassic landscape of waterfalls and gulches. (kipahulu.org)

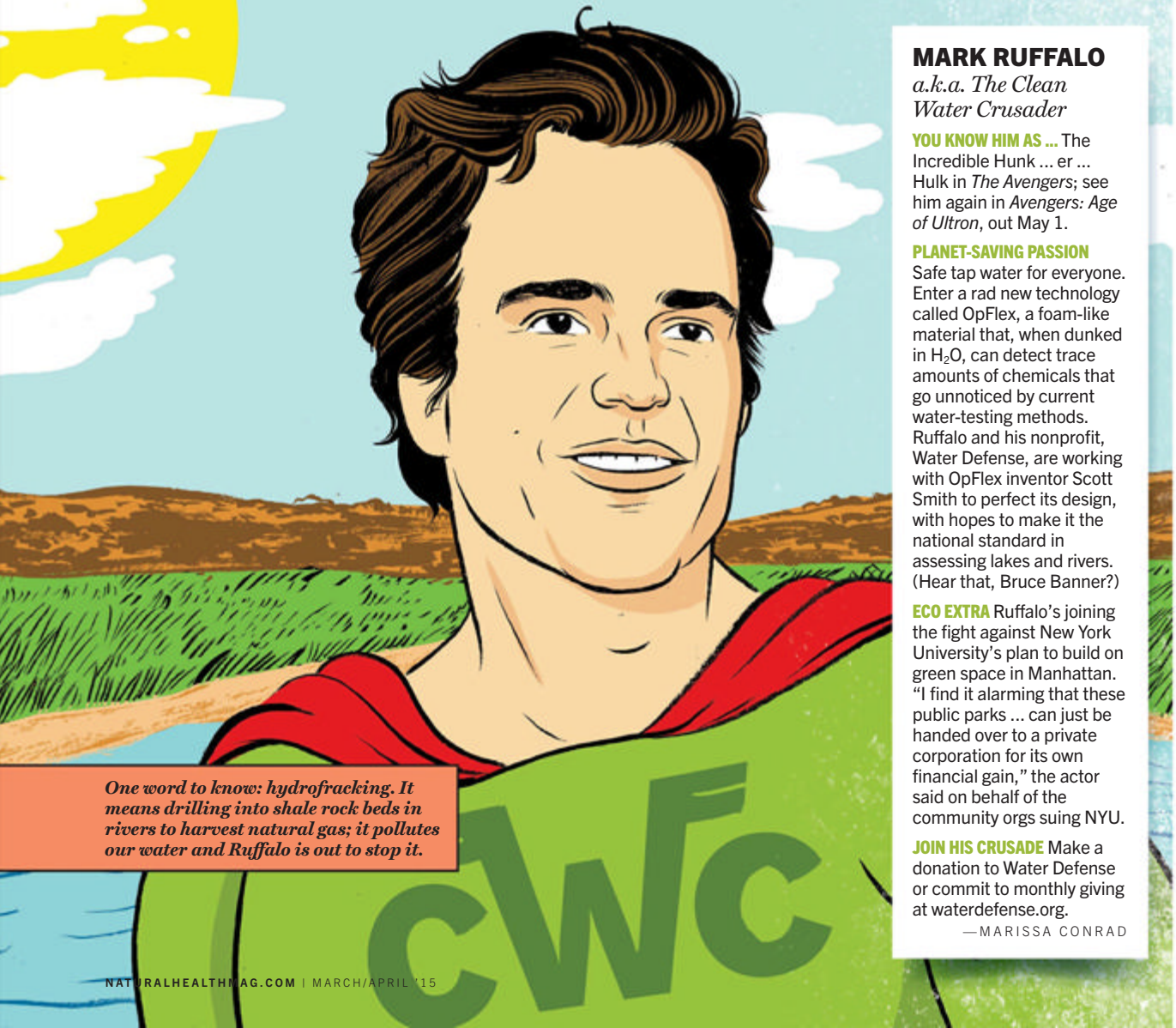


ILLUSTRATION BY MAGGIE LI

THE EARTH'S HOTTEST ECO HEROES

They may not leap tall buildings in a single bound, but these planet-loving celebs are superheroes in our eyes. See what six honorable (and sexy!) dudes are doing to green the world.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY **ALEX FINE**



One word to know: hydrofracking. It means drilling into shale rock beds in rivers to harvest natural gas; it pollutes our water and Ruffalo is out to stop it.

MARK RUFFALO

a.k.a. The Clean Water Crusader

YOU KNOW HIM AS ... The Incredible Hunk ... er ... Hulk in *The Avengers*; see him again in *Avengers: Age of Ultron*, out May 1.

PLANET-SAVING PASSION Safe tap water for everyone. Enter a rad new technology called OpFlex, a foam-like material that, when dunked in H_2O, can detect trace amounts of chemicals that go unnoticed by current water-testing methods. Ruffalo and his nonprofit, Water Defense, are working with OpFlex inventor Scott Smith to perfect its design, with hopes to make it the national standard in assessing lakes and rivers. (Hear that, Bruce Banner?)

ECO EXTRA Ruffalo's joining the fight against New York University's plan to build on green space in Manhattan. "I find it alarming that these public parks ... can just be handed over to a private corporation for its own financial gain," the actor said on behalf of the community orgs suing NYU.

JOIN HIS CRUSADE Make a donation to Water Defense or commit to monthly giving at waterdefense.org.

—MARISSA CONRAD

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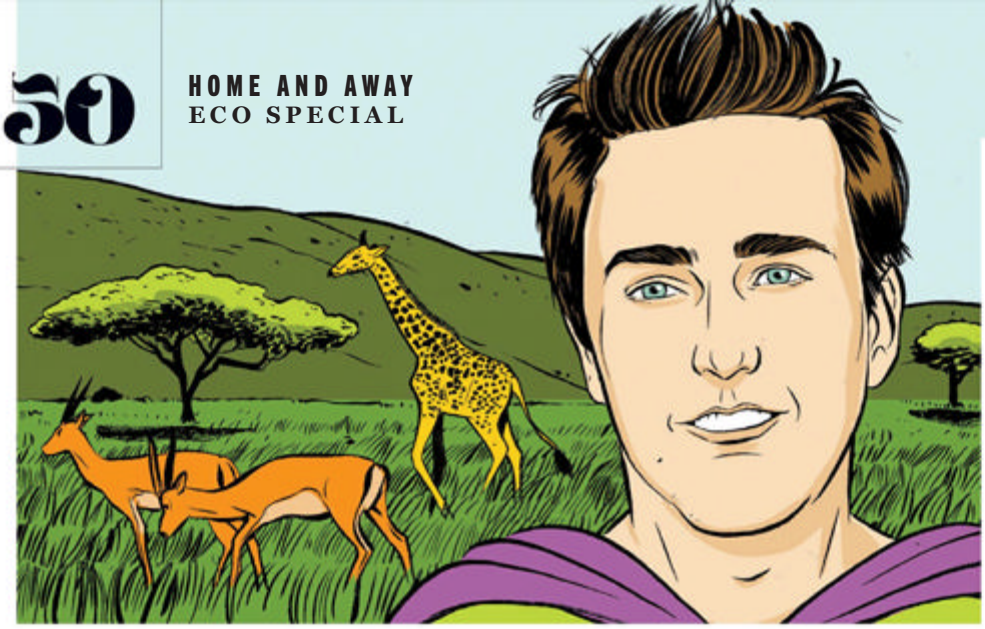
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EDWARD NORTON
a.k.a. Captain Conservation

YOU KNOW HIM AS ... An actor, director and bearer of wowza abs (hello, *Fight Club*).

PLANET-SAVING PASSION Protecting Kenya's beautiful Chyulu Hills. As the U.S. board president of the Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust, Norton works with Maasai warrior Samson Parashina and other tribespeople who own the land on everything from creating wildlife refuges to promoting ecotourism. Parashina even stayed at Norton's apartment in 2009 before both men ran the New York City Marathon, a feat that raised more than $1 million for MWCT. (Heck, we'd crush 26.2 miles for a sleepover with Norton.)

ECO EXTRA Last fall, Norton, U.N. Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity, joined world leaders and tech pioneers at the Social Good Summit in New York City to brainstorm ways to better our planet.

JOIN HIS CRUSADE Dream scenario: Book a safari with tour group Campi ya Kanzi, which donates a portion of proceeds to Maasai conservation. Or: Host a read-a-thon to raise dough (visit maasaiwilderness.org for help getting started).

—ANDREA STANLEY

ADRIAN GRENIER
a.k.a. The Green Machine

YOU KNOW HIM AS ... Gorgeous Vincent Chase in *Entourage* and its film adaptation, out in June.

PLANET-SAVING PASSION To show you that green can be sleek! Visit Grenier's site, shft.com, to find sustainable-but-chic home decor and fashion. New this spring: the SHFT Mobile Kitchen Classroom, which gives eco-focused cooking classes to New York high schoolers.

ECO EXTRA Bzzz! Grenier's short film *A Bee's Invoice* teaches us to protect our natural resources—and how hot Grenier looks sitting on a park bench.

JOIN HIS CRUSADE Download SHFT's Food Tripping app to find green food markets and restaurants near you. —EMILY C. JOHNSON



JACK JOHNSON
a.k.a. Eco Man

YOU KNOW HIM AS ... The mellow crooner with the surfer bod and six play-on-repeat albums.

PLANET-SAVING PASSION Everything! Through the nonprofits he's founded, including the Johnson Ohana Charitable Foundation, the singer has championed environmental education in schools, plastic-free initiatives and more. Most impressive: He donated 100 percent of his tour profits from 2010 through 2013 to his green orgs.

ECO EXTRA On his 2014 world tour, Johnson and his crew set up recycling, composting and water stations at nearly every venue. Inspired fans flocked to shows on bikes, toting aluminum bottles for their H_2O.

JOIN HIS CRUSADE All At Once (allatonce.org), a social network founded by Johnson and his wife, Kim, steers you to local and national nonprofits looking for volunteers, and the resources you need to start your own community organization. —JACQUELINE NOCHISAKI



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WILL.I.AM
a.k.a. The Recycling Ranger

YOU KNOW HIM AS ... The most stylin' of The Black Eyed Peas (sorry, Fergie).

PLANET-SAVING PASSION To clean up your trash. Shocked by how much garbage fans leave on arena floors, the dapper rapper teamed with Coca-Cola to found Ekocycle, which works with brands like 59Fifty and Adidas to make suits, hats, shirts and headphones out of tossed cans and bottles.

ECO EXTRA The tech-junkie musician helped design the new Ekocycle Cube 3D printer ($1,199, cubify.com), which molds recycled plastic into phone covers and more.

JOIN HIS CRUSADE Shop ekocycle.com for finds like a skinny-lapeled suit jacket made from 63% reused materials. —T.K. BRADY

Check out Ekocycle's blog (ekocyclemovement.com) to find more will.i.am-approved sustainable fashion brands such as Proof Eyewear, which makes biodegradable frames from cotton pulp.

LEONARDO DICAPRIO
a.k.a. The Wildlife Warrior

YOU KNOW HIM AS ... Romeo to Claire Danes or Jack to Kate Winslet—two personas forever preserved no matter what iteration of Leo comes next.

PLANET-SAVING PASSION Going all out. Few celebs step up to bat more frequently for the environment and its beautiful creatures (and no, we're not talking about models). In the last year alone, DiCaprio has given $2 million to Oceans 5, a group that's building marine reserves for overfished species; delivered an impassioned speech about climate change to the U.N.; and joined more than 300,000 protesters in New York City for the People's Climate March, lobbying to pass new climate-change legislation.

ECO EXTRA DiCaprio teamed with Netflix to produce *Virunga*, a documentary about saving gorillas from poachers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

JOIN HIS CRUSADE Sign a petition to protect tiger habitats or to stop drilling in the Arctic Ocean via one of DiCaprio's favorite causes, the World Wildlife Fund (worldwildlife.org). You'll feel like the king of the world! —M.C.



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– Janet F.

Have you ever said to yourself "I'd love to get a computer, if only I could figure out how to use it." Well, you're not alone. Computers were supposed to make our lives simpler, but they've gotten so complicated that they are not worth the trouble. With all of the "pointing and clicking" and "dragging and dropping" you're lucky if you can figure out where you are. Plus, you are constantly worrying about viruses and freeze-ups. If this sounds familiar, we have great news for you. There is finally a computer that's designed for simplicity and ease of use. It's the WOW Computer, and it was designed with you in mind. This computer is easy-to-use, worry-free and literally puts the world at your fingertips. From the moment you open the box, you'll realize how different the WOW Computer is. The components are all connected; all you do is plug it into an outlet and your high-speed Internet connection. Then you'll see the screen – it's now 22 inches. This is a completely new touch screen system, without the cluttered look of the normal computer screen. The "buttons" on the screen are easy to see and easy to understand. All you do is touch one of them, from the Web, Email, Calendar to Games– you name it… and a new screen opens up. It's so easy to use you won't have to ask your children or grandchildren for help. Until now, the very people who could benefit most from E-mail and the Internet are the ones that have had the hardest time accessing it. Now, thanks to the WOW Computer, countless older Americans are discovering the wonderful world of the Internet every day. Isn't it time you took part? Call now, and a patient, knowledgeable product expert will tell you how you can try it in your home for 30 days. If you are not totally satisfied, simply return it within 30 days for a refund of the product purchase price. Call today.

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LOOK GREAT EFFORTLESSLY



Pale purple lids and loose waves: a pretty pairing.

ANTONIO DE MORAES BARROS FILHO/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES

SWEET LAVENDER

This spring, purple reigns! Lilac eye shadow can be fresh and feminine, says Tom Pecheux, a makeup artist in Paris who created this look with MAC Cosmetics for a recent Derek Lam show. To temper the iridescent shade, prime your lid with a swipe of taupe. Top the nude hue with mauve, like **Urban Decay Eyeshadow in Bordello** ($18, urbandecay.com), if you're fair. For medium to dark skin, try indigo, like **Clarins Minérale Mono Eyeshadow in Vibrant Violet** ($21, clarinsusa.com). Apply black mascara on top lashes, then use an eggplant shade, like **Dr. Hauschka Volumizing Mascara in Aubergine** ($30, drhauschka.com), on tips to brighten your peepers.

BY ALESSANDRA FORESTO



SOFTEN UP

Does your face feel tight after you give it a scrub? Use these easy exfoliating tips for smooth skin sans irritation.

DO find the right method for you. If you have dry skin, treat it with lotion every day, then use a face brush or a scrub with rough granules once a week to buff away flakes on the very top layer of your complexion, says Naana Boakye, M.D., a dermatologist in Englewood Cliffs, N.J. If you're oily, you can try chemical exfoliation, which uses vitamins A and C and acids, like glycolic, salicylic, lactic and citric (all can come from natural sources), to slowly dissolve that lackluster layer and stimulate the production of new healthy cells. Have combination skin? Use a chemical exfoliator once during the week and a face brush once on the weekend.

DON'T use scrubs with plastic microbeads. A 2012 survey of pollutants in the Great Lakes, published in the *Marine Pollution Bulletin,* found that a very large amount of plastic contamination in the water came from beads found in personal-care products, like face scrubs. Skip any wash that uses polyethylene, polypropylene, polyethylene terephthalate, polymethyl methacrylate or nylon. Opt for papaya and pineapple enzymes or jojoba beads.

DO check your other skin care for exfoliating ingredients. Those acids we mentioned at left are often used in lotion and serum as well as face wash. Scan the labels of your products to make sure you're not unknowingly already using exfoliants. Some keywords to look for: retinoic acid and retinyl palmitate (derivatives of vitamin A), ascorbic acid (vitamin C) and willow bark extract (salicylic acid).

TRY THIS

SHOWER POWER

It's almost time to swap your cozy sweaters for short sleeves. Prepare to bare your skin with one of these new sulfate-free body washes.



Aveda Beautifying Crème Cleansing Oil uses babassu, safflower and olive oils to moisturize parched skin. Its fresh bergamot and lavender scent is a nice bonus. ($28, aveda.com)



For oily and blemish-prone skin, naturally derived salicylic acid and tomato extract in the creamy **Yes to Tomatoes Balancing Body Wash** clear bumps and even out rough texture. ($9, yestocarrots.com)



All-natural **Weleda Evening Primrose Age Revitalizing Body Wash** is packed with anti-aging ingredients (like macadamia nut oil) to increase elasticity. ($12, usa.weleda.com)

MAKE IT GORGEOUS!

SALT & ALOE VERA WAVE SPRAY

Even in a landlocked kitchen, you can whip up the secret to looking like a carefree surf goddess. The combo of Epsom and sea salts—both contain nourishing magnesium, the latter also boasting volume-building sodium—is key to giving hair long-lasting texture and bend without stiffness, according to Marra St. Clair and Lori Kenyon Farley, authors of *The Juice Cleanse Reset Diet*. Add a touch of moisturizing aloe vera gel for silky, mermaid-like waves.

- 2 cups hot water
- ¼ cup Epsom salts
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 2 teaspoons aloe vera gel
- 1 teaspoon conditioner

Put all ingredients in a 12-ounce spray bottle and shake vigorously until salt dissolves (about 2 minutes). Let cool, then spritz on damp hair from roots to ends, scrunching up with a towel to create texture. Allow your hair to air-dry for tousled, windswept waves. You can also spray on dry roots to refresh your style and fight flatness. Store the spray in a dry, cool place for up to four months.

RATHER BUY THAN DIY?

Strengthening proteins and conditioners in the paraben- and phthalate-free formula of **L'Oréal Paris Advanced Hairstyle Txt It Tousle Waves Spray** repair brittle, damaged and color-treated hair, while salt thickens and lends hold. ($5, drugstores)



PATRIC SHAW/TRUNK ARCHIVE

BY ALESSANDRA FORESTO



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Tsubaki fights wrinkles and leaves hair silky smooth.

NATURAL INGREDIENTS A TO Z

Ergothioneine? Tsubaki? Wu Zhu *What?* You practically need a biology degree to read the labels on natural beauty products. That's why we've compiled a glossary of buzzwords—your primer to understanding which plant-derived actives really work and where to find them. Get ready to learn your new ABCs!

a

Anogeissus

You can blame the slow sagging of aging skin on free radicals—particles in everything from UV rays to the air we breathe that break down healthy cells. This bark extract (from a Ghana-native tree) has strong antioxidant properties to prevent that cell damage. Some research has shown it also stimulates the natural production of fibrillin, a protein that maintains skin's elasticity.



TRY **Origins Plantscription Anti-Aging Power Serum** ($56, origins.com)

Babassu

This oil from the nut of an Amazonian tree has a melting point close to skin's temperature, which means it absorbs quickly without leaving any slick residue. Plus, it contains rich fatty acids to soothe irritation. In hair products, those same nutrients have the power to make breakage-prone strands impressively silky.



TRY **Aveda Damage Remedy Restructuring Shampoo** ($28, aveda.com)

Copper

You may think of old pennies, but this metal is quite the heavy hitter in beauty, too. Its peptides can promote elastin production (*sayonara*, wrinkles!), fight dehydrating environmental damage (*adieu*, flaky patches!) and help amp up your body's healing process (peace out, scars and dark spots!).



TRY **Perricone Blue Plasma Cleansing Treatment** ($39, perriconemd.com)

Date palm

The extract from this fruit (yes, the one with the yummy caramel taste) acts like a multivitamin for your complexion. It packs wrinkle-fighting vitamins A and E, mineral salts, iron and magnesium, plus exfoliating lactic acid.



TRY **Ahava Extreme Night Treatment** ($74, ahavaus.com)

Ergothioneine

Remember those free radicals back under A? One of the most damaging kinds is nitric oxide. This amino acid from mushrooms neutralizes that bad boy. A study found ergothioneine (EGT) to be more effective than coenzyme Q10, a strong antioxidant used in skin care for its high efficiency. Research also shows that EGT boosts the brightening effects of vitamin C.



TRY **PCA C-Quench Antioxidant Serum** ($74, pcaskin.com)

Feverfew

This small yellow-and-white flower comes from the same family as chamomile, marigold and echinacea. You may have heard about its uses for headaches and fever relief, but it also subdues angry redness from rosacea, acne and even sunburn when applied directly to skin.



TRY **Aveeno Ultra-Calming Foaming Cleanser** ($7, drugstores)

Guarana

The powerful Brazilian fruit fights bacteria (keeping acne at bay) temporarily diminishes the appearance of cellulite (thanks to its high caffeine content) *and* conditions hair. Whew!



TRY **Pevonia Botanica Smooth & Tone Body-Svelt Cream** ($70, pevonia.com)

ROBERT LLEWELLYN/GETTY IMAGES

BY KAYLEIGH DONAHUE HODES



What's your skincare doing to your sensitive skin?

If it's causing redness, blotchiness, and irritation... maybe it's not really for sensitive skin.

Sometimes words can be deceiving. Just because a skincare product says it's for sensitive skin... doesn't mean it is. Sensitive skin isn't the same for everyone. Sometimes it's about fragrance. Sometimes color. Sometimes you just don't know.

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Horsetail

A high concentration of the mineral silica in this ancient plant extract (official name: *equisetum*) keeps your scalp and mane strong and healthy, which means fewer split ends. For skin, its anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial powers help to repair tissue, including acne and wrinkles. There's a chance of irritation, though, so use it sparingly.



TRY **Neal's Yard Remedies Nurturing Rose Shampoo** ($18, us.nyrorganic.com)

Indigo

Japanese samurai wore a layer of indigo-dyed cotton under their armor to heal injuries. The plant extract's regenerative qualities reduce irritation and symptoms of eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis.



TRY **Tatcha Indigo Soothing Renewal Treatment** ($98, tatcha.com)

Jujube

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, jujube balances the heart. But your skin can also reap some benefits from this extract. The red fruit holds flavonoids and vitamin C to battle aging environmental damage and improve firmness.



TRY **Wei Jujube Age Control Serum** ($78, dermstore.com)

Kelp

That seaweed you're used to seeing on the shore is floating around the beauty aisles, giving your skin a brightening boost—it contains 30 minerals and vitamins C, D, E, K and B to stimulate cell regeneration.



TRY **Alba Botanica Even Advanced Deep Sea Facial Mask** ($12, drugstores)

Linden blossom

Its sweet scent is used in perfume, but the extract is also full of antioxidant kaempferol and sugar molecules that retain water. Together, they plump and moisturize skin.



TRY **John Masters Organics Linden Blossom Face Creme Cleanser** ($22, johnmasters.com)

Maracuja

This oil from an Amazonian fruit is bursting with vitamin C and hydrating linoleic acid. Apply it every day to brighten your skin tone.



TRY **Tarte Maracuja Neck Treatment** ($49, tarte cosmetics.com)

Noni

The term *superfood* is played out, but this fruit (from the South Pacific islands) is the real deal. The juice is sipped in Polynesia for its high vitamin content. Applied topically, it strengthens skin to relieve sensitivity and combat signs of aging.



TRY **Kora Energising Citrus Mist** ($44, koraorganics.com)

Oxygen

The molecules of O_2 found in lotions have been modified in a lab to stay active in liquid form. As we age, it becomes difficult for our skin cells to absorb the oxygen they need to function, which leads to dryness and wrinkles. Adding the molecule to your facial care could replenish that loss. But the research is mixed—because O_2 itself is a free radical, some experts are wary of applying it directly to skin. The jury is still out!



TRY **Karin Herzog Oxygen Hyalu Lift** ($130, karin herzog.com)

Polyphenols

If you've seen this term and are totally baffled by it, we don't blame you. It refers to a kind of antioxidant found in fruit, tea and wine. There are two polyphenols widely used in skin care: Grape seed polyphenols keep skin soft by preventing the depletion of hyaluronic acid; resveratrol regulates collagen production.



TRY **Skinceuticals Resveratrol B E** ($145, skinceuticals.com)

Quinoa

Surprised to see your favorite healthy side dish on this list? The ancient Incan grain is packed with amino acids that can penetrate hair's cortex and repair brittleness and damage from within. It also forms a protective barrier around strands to lock in moisture and prevent color from fading.



TRY **Paul Mitchell Ultimate Color Repair Triple Rescue** ($20, paulmitchell.com for salons)



From a flowering tree, linden blossom is an all-star moisturizer.



The fluffy tips of horsetail pack healthy minerals and antoxidants.

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Rosa arctica

Known as the "resurrection plant" for surviving long dry spells, this flower extract has a restorative effect on skin. It prevents dryness and stimulates collagen production to stem sagging.



TRY **Kiehl's Rosa Arctica Lightweight Cream** ($60, kiehls.com)

Shiso

The extract from the seed of this Asian herb is chock-full of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, which fight wrinkles, provide moisture and lighten sunspots. If you weren't as religious about SPF in the past as you are now, consider this botanical your new best friend.



TRY **The Body Shop Moisture White Shiso Overnight Triple Boost Serum** ($30, thebodyshop-usa.com)

Tsubaki

What's pink or white and packs lots of vitamins? The simple answer is camellia, known in Japan as tsubaki. Studies show its impressive levels of fatty acids and antioxidants promote wrinkle-smoothing collagen creation, while vitamin E conditions hair.



TRY **Boscia Tsubaki Deep Hydration Sleeping Mask** ($34, boscia.com)

Umbrian clay

Silica, magnesia and iron in this detoxifying soil (from the Italian city of Nocera Umbra) soak up oil and wash away dead cells to unclog pores while balancing skin's pH to prevent uneven texture. The result: a matte, bump-free look without redness or discomfort.



TRY **Fresh Umbrian Clay Mattifying Face Exfoliant** ($32, fresh.com)

Valerian

This root extract is used to treat insomnia, because it eases stiffness and relaxes the body—and that's exactly what it does in skin care, too. Look for it in lotions to lessen tension in the face, giving your skin a smooth, firm appearance, and in bath soaks to alleviate aches and pains.



TRY **June Jacobs Cucumber Reviving Day Cream** ($54, junejacobs.com)



Valerian eases facial tension, creating a smooth appearance.

Wu Zhu Yu

The Chinese tree extract (thought to heal ailments like hypertension and morning sickness) boosts circulation, leading to a bright, rosy complexion. When applied under eyes, it de-puffs and diminishes the look of dark circles.



TRY **Jurlique Herbal Recovery Advanced Eye Serum** ($48, jurlique.com)

Ximenia

Brittle locks and flaky patches don't stand a chance! The thick oil from the seed kernels of this small South African shrub is rich in fatty acids, which means it's a foolproof way to restore softness and silkiness to parched hair and skin.



TRY **Ojon Rare Blend Moisture Therapy Conditioner** ($30, ojon.com)

Yeast

Grossed out by the idea of slathering on a fungus? Research shows yeast can accelerate the healing of wounds (including wrinkles, which are, in essence, tiny injuries) and preserve moisture. It also contains antioxidant beta-glucan, which protects cells from damage, so they can work more efficiently to keep your complexion youthful and dewy.



TRY **Naturopathica Cassis Ultra Replenishing Cream** ($85, naturopathica.com)

Z

Zeolite

This mineral complex, formed in areas of volcanic activity and made of aluminum, silicon and oxygen, has been used to clean nuclear waste (at Chernobyl and Fukushima) because of its ability to absorb impurities. For skin, it's the ultimate vacuum cleaner, detoxifying pores of grime and dirt. In hair products, it works to add volume and texture, thanks to its grittiness.



TRY **Glō Therapeutics Pumpkin Enzyme Scrub** ($33, glo professional.com)

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(recipe on p. 69)

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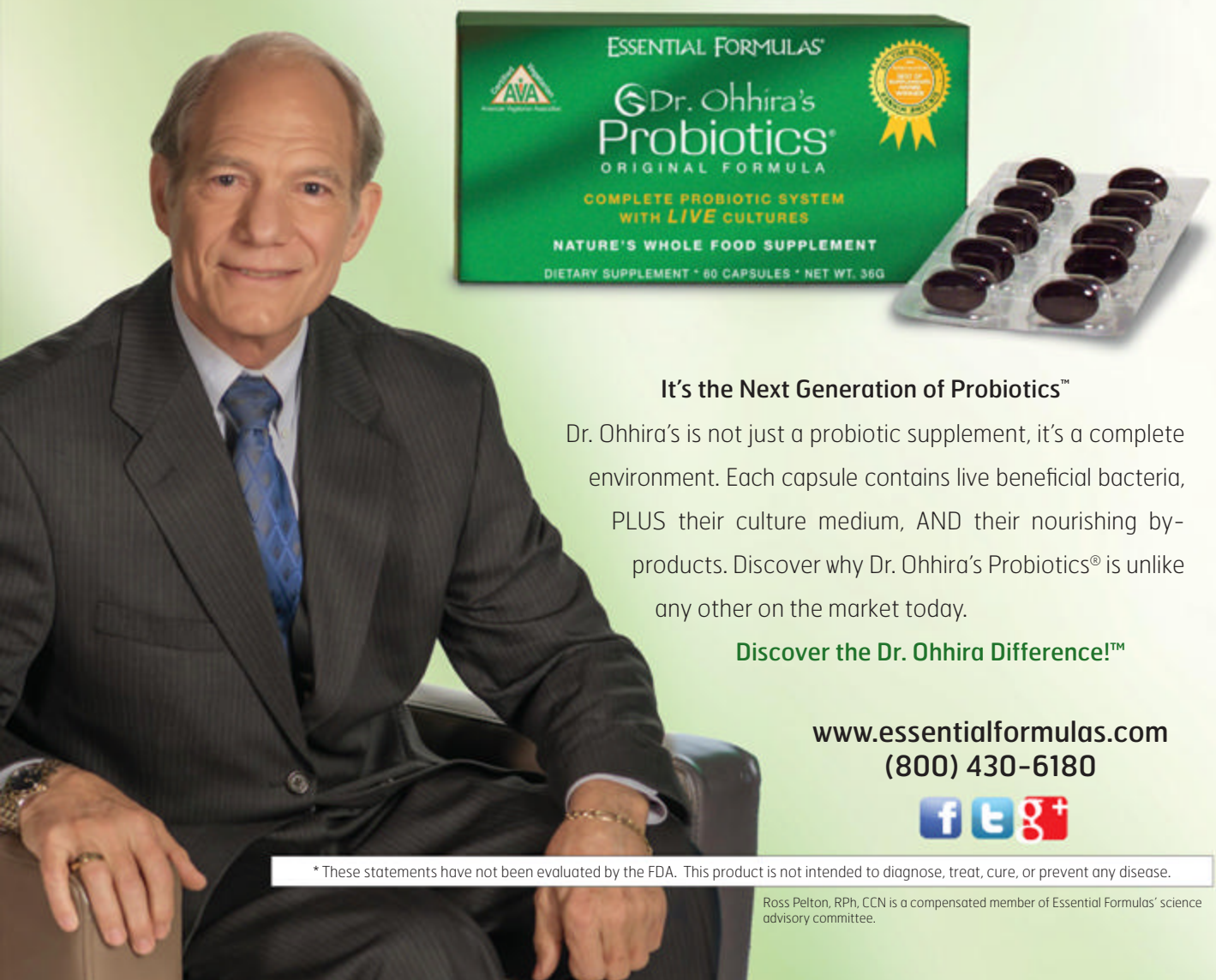
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Chef April Bloomfield of Michelin-starred restaurant The Spotted Pig in New York City works magic with veggies in her new cookbook, *A Girl and Her Greens*.

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TAGLIATELLE *with* ASPARAGUS *and* PARMESAN FONDUTA

SERVES 6 / **ACTIVE:** 20 MINUTES (70 IF MAKING NOODLES) / **TOTAL:** 30 MINUTES (1 HOUR 45 MINUTES IF MAKING NOODLES)

- 2 large egg yolks
- 1½ cups crème fraîche
- 5 ounces Parmesan, finely grated, plus additional for garnish
- 1 medium garlic clove, finely grated
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 1 pound (2½ cups) asparagus, woody bottoms snapped off, stalks cut diagonally into ½-inch-thick pieces and tips left whole
- 10 ounces fresh tagliatelle noodles (recipe at right if using homemade)

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Meanwhile, in a small pot, bring an inch or 2 of water to a boil.
2. In a heatproof bowl that fits snugly in the small pot without touching the boiling water, stir together the egg yolks, crème fraîche, Parmesan and garlic. Set the bowl over the pot and whisk the egg mixture constantly, scraping the sides and removing the bowl from the pot every couple of minutes (while whisking) to keep the mixture from bubbling. Cook until the cheese has completely melted and the mixture is silky smooth and slightly thickened (it should thinly coat the back of a spoon), about 8 minutes. Remove bowl from heat and set aside.
3. Salt the large pot of boiling water generously until it tastes slightly less salty than the sea. Add the asparagus and pasta to the water and cook until the asparagus is juicy with a slight bite, about 4 minutes.
4. Drain the pasta and asparagus well in a colander, then pour them back into the now-empty pot. Pour in most of the fonduta and toss gently, but well. Season to taste with salt and the rest of the fonduta, if desired. (If looking for a lighter dish, reserve extra fonduta for another purpose.) Transfer to bowls, top with a sprinkle of Parmesan and serve immediately.

NUTRITION SCORE PER SERVING
473 calories, 36g fat (20g saturated), 15g protein, 17g carbohydrates, 2g fiber, 369mg sodium

Fresh Egg Pasta

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

- 1 cup fine semolina flour, plus extra for dusting
- 1 cup 00 flour,* plus extra for dusting
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
- 12 large egg yolks plus 1 large egg

**00 is an extra-fine Italian flour; find it at an Italian market or online at amazon.com, or substitute all-purpose flour, finely sifted*

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer with a dough hook attachment, combine flours and salt. With mixer on low speed, add egg and yolks. Increase speed to medium-low; mix until you have smooth, shiny, rather stiff dough and loose bits of flour are incorporated, about 3 minutes.



2. Transfer dough to a work surface, cut in half and knead each half for 3 minutes. Wrap each half in plastic wrap, let rest for 20 minutes to 1 hour and cut each piece in half again.
3. Form 1 dough hunk into rough 4-by-6-inch rectangle; roll out as thin as possible. (For best results, use a pasta machine or attachment. Feed dough through widest setting twice and each other setting once; fold onto itself several times to form rough 5-by-8-inch rectangle; feed again through each setting, starting at widest.) Repeat with rest of dough.
4. Cut rolled-out portions into 12-inch-long sheets, dust each side with flour and stack sheets. Cut stack lengthwise into ½-inch-wide slices. Gently toss, separating into noodles.



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*No significant difference has been shown in cows treated with the artificial growth hormone rBST and non-rBST treated cows.



SNAP PEA SALAD

SERVES 4 / **ACTIVE:** 20 MINUTES / **TOTAL:** 20 MINUTES

- 1 pound sugar snap peas, trimmed and strings removed
- 1 small green garlic clove, peeled and very thinly sliced
- Generous pinch fresh mint leaves, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup Simple Lemon Dressing (recipe on next page)
- Freshly squeezed lemon juice, to taste
- Salt, to taste
- 4 handfuls arugula
- 4 ounces goat cheese (optional)

1. In a large bowl, combine peas, garlic and mint; toss in dressing gently but well. Add lemon juice and salt.
2. Add arugula and toss gently to coat leaves in



dressing without bruising them. Arrange salad on a platter and garnish with goat cheese if desired. Serve immediately.

NUTRITION SCORE PER SERVING
142 calories, 10g fat (1g saturated), 3g protein, 9g carbohydrates, 3g fiber, 167mg sodium

Simple Lemon Dressing

MAKES ½ CUP PLUS 3 TABLESPOONS

- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¾ teaspoon sea salt

Combine ingredients in a container with a tight-fitting lid and shake vigorously until mixture looks creamy. Dressing can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 2 days; shake again just before using.

(from p. 64)

POT-ROASTED ARTICHOKES *with* WHITE WINE *and* CAPERS

SERVES 6 / **ACTIVE:** 45 MINUTES / **TOTAL:** 60 MINUTES

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3½ pounds (about 18) baby artichokes, turned (see right)
- 2 medium garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1½ teaspoons sea salt
- 1½ cups dry white wine, such as Sauvignon Blanc
- 1 heaping tablespoon drained capers
- Generous pinch fresh mint leaves, torn

1. In a heavy pot wide enough to hold artichokes with extra room, heat oil over medium-high heat until it begins to smoke. Stand artichokes cut sides down in oil. After 1 minute, reduce heat to medium-low. Add garlic and salt; cook, without stirring, until garlic turns golden, about 3 minutes.
2. Pour in wine, cover pot and cook, without stirring, at a vigorous simmer for 20 minutes; add capers and cover again. Cook until a sharp knife slips into thick artichoke bottoms with little resistance, about 5 more minutes.
3. Remove lid, raise heat to medium-high and bring liquid to a boil. Cook until wine has evaporated, about 3 minutes. Add mint and keep cooking artichokes (it's OK if a few of them tip over) until cut sides are deep golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Lower heat if artichokes start to get too dark.
4. Arrange artichokes on a plate; top with capers, oil and crispy mint. Serve hot or at room temperature.

NUTRITION SCORE PER SERVING
186 calories, 10g fat (1g saturated), 3g protein, 14g carbohydrates, 9g fiber, 693mg sodium

TURNING ARTICHOKES

"I suppose some people might find it a bother, but I quite like turning artichokes. It's like an advanced version of shelling peas—similarly meditative and even a bit fun.

Fill a large bowl with water and squeeze in the juice of a lemon. Working with 1 artichoke at a time, pluck off the green leaves and cut off about ½ inch of the stem. Use a peeler to trim away the tough green stuff at the base of the artichoke, then peel the stem, getting as close as you can to the pale green center. Drop the artichoke into the water and repeat with the remaining veggies. Cut 1 inch from the tip of each artichoke, then use a small spoon to scoop out and discard the feathery choke. Squeeze, then drain on paper towels for about 5 minutes."

—APRIL BLOOMFIELD



Adapted from *A Girl and Her Greens* by April Bloomfield, Ecco/HarperCollins ($25, amazon.com). Copyright © 2015. Photography by David Loftus.



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SPRING FLINGS

Talk about a flash in the (frying) pan: These short-season greens can vanish from the market just weeks after they arrive. Cook 'em while you can with tips from chef Kyle McClelland of Dallas restaurant Driftwood.



FIDDLEHEAD FERNS

McClelland loves the earthy flavor of these pretty pinwheels. Prolong their life by packing 3 cups into a mason jar with ½ cup **apple cider vinegar**, 1 tablespoon **pickling spice** and ½ teaspoon each **salt** and **pepper**. Let sit in a dark pantry at least 48 hours (or up to a year) before eating the pickled veggies solo or adding to salads. Refrigerate after opening.



GREEN GARLIC

Garlic picked now sports a barely sprouted bulb that yields a milder flavor than when fully grown; at this early stage, the green stalk is edible, too. For a satisfying side, McClelland slivers 4 stalks and bulbs (no peeling necessary) and sautés them with ½ cup **morel mushrooms**, 2 tablespoons **olive oil** and **salt** and **pepper** to taste.



RAMPS

Maximize the oniony, garlicky bite of leafy green ramps (also called spring onions or wild leeks) in this simple side dish you might find at Driftwood or McClelland's other Dallas restaurant, Proof + Pantry: Cut off and discard roots, then drizzle leaves with **olive oil**, sprinkle with **salt** and **pepper** and grill. "It's all about that perfect char," the chef says.



STINGING NETTLES

Warning: Until cooked, these peppery leaves will irritate your skin. Wear thick gloves to toss nettles into boiling water with a teaspoon of **salt**. After 30 seconds, dunk the greens in cold water; remove and squeeze out liquid. In a blender, purée with an equal portion **sautéed spinach** and a splash of **white verjus**, a mildly acidic grape juice. Salt to taste, and enjoy over **pasta**.

RAMP HYSTERIA: A BRIEF HISTORY

Ramps are naturally limited-edition *and* grant diners first-taste-of-spring bragging rights, leading to an almost comical level of worship among foodies. See the progression of the green's pop-star status.

April 3, 2005 Spence Farm in Fairbury, Ill., hosts a public ramp dig.

April 18, 2007 Writer Michael Nagrant calls ramps "the agricultural version of crystal meth" on HungryMag.com.

April 2, 2008 *Gourmet* prints an ode to ramps by chef Yoshi Yamada.

April 20, 2010 Iron Chef winner Marc Forgione unveils a seven-course ramp tasting menu at his eponymous NYC restaurant.

May 8, 2010 In NYC, Shake Shack's special hot dog topped with ramps sells out in 4 hours.

April 20, 2013 A ramp festival in Richwood, W.Va., sets a record by serving 1,000-plus ramp suppers in one night.

April 1, 2014 Food website The Braiser converts to The Ramp for April Fools' Day; articles include "13 Alliums That Wish They Were Ramps." Love it!

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAY VAN MILLINGEN

BY MARISSA CONRAD

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Shrink Your Waste

Throwing less in your trash is easier than you think–and it benefits more than just the environment. People who reduce what they toss wind up saving cash and eating a healthier diet, too. Here's your room-by-room guide to a simpler, less wasteful life.

BY **JULIA DENNISON**

"Waste is a concept humans invented and, theoretically, could uninvent." This is the mantra of Darby Hoover, a senior resource specialist at the National Resources Defense Council and an expert on something she hates: trash. But uninventing garbage may be hard to imagine when even an Amazon order leaves you with plastic air bags to dispose of. Americans generate more garbage than any other country in the world: 4.4 pounds per person per day, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). That figure (nearly double what it was in 1960!) doesn't even include industrial or construction waste—just municipal solid waste (MSW), defined as the everyday items people toss to the curb. The result: a whopping 135 million tons of trash stacking up in landfills every year—enough to spread 30-stories high over almost 850 football fields.

Clearly, this is troubling for the environment. As solid waste decomposes, it emits methane, a greenhouse gas that traps unwanted heat in the Earth's atmosphere. Landfills are the third-largest source of methane emissions in the U.S., accounting for nearly 20 percent. Meanwhile, what the EPA calls "waste management"—which includes the army of trucks hauling trash to those landfills—is responsible for up to 5 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Then there's the Pacific Ocean's trash vortex, a thousands-of-miles-long floating patch of garbage—formed by currents pulling together illegally dumped waste—that's polluting our waters and killing our marine life (see p. 77 for more). And these problems are poised to grow: If we continue on our current wasteful path, we could see a 70 percent global increase in MSW over the next 10 years, a World Bank study predicts.

Rethinking what we toss has led people like Erika Rathje, a web and graphic designer in Vancouver, B.C., to adopt a zero-waste lifestyle. By recycling, composting and reducing what she bought, Rathje was able to go an astounding 13 months without taking out her trash—and when she finally did, all she chucked out were a couple of unrecyclable broken glasses from Ikea, freshness packets from supplement bottles, floor sweepings and a paint-splattered plastic sheet from a visiting decorator. "Change your pattern once, and you can make it a habit," Rathje says.

Rathje's commitment is ambitious, but even small changes help—the Earth *and* you. Bea Johnson, author of *Zero Waste Home*, has saved thousands of dollars over the years because she consumes less and buys in bulk (which she says knocks 15 percent off the price). "When you replace anything that's disposable with a reusable alternative, you accumulate the savings," she adds. Ready to cut back? Follow this easy guide to slashing trash in every aspect of your life.

kitchen/dining room



EASY TWEAKS

Keep paper towels out of sight Jen Boulden of blog JenB TV stashes her roll of non-bleached towels under the sink for major spills only.

Use the humans at the grocery store Up to a third of household waste is made up of packaging, much of it from food. Belly up to the butcher and bakery counters to buy meat and bread wrapped in paper (keep loaves in a bread box at home for freshness). Don't forget a reusable tote like the Stash It ($16, ourgreenhome.co), which folds up smaller than a wallet.

Buy dish brushes and sponges made of natural materials Wood, boar bristle and nut-shell scrubbers are biodegradable and look better, too, Rathje says. She recommends Twist sponges (from $2, twistclean.com).

Use loose-leaf tea Skip the bags and get a reusable metal tea ball (starting at about $3), which locks leaves into a mesh compartment for steeping. Bonus: Stock it with herbs to flavor your next soup.

GO-GREENER GOALS!

Choose cloth napkins We've all seen it: partygoers wadding up one barely-used paper napkin after another until a zillion are gone. Fabric garners more respect, Johnson says: "If we put out a stack of cloth napkins, our guests use maybe half." For families, Christine Lenches-Hinkel, founder of eco-consultancy firm Waste Less Living in Pasadena, Calif., suggests a labeling system so each person can reuse his napkin a few times before washing. Buy various colors and know that Mom gets red, Dad gets blue and so on.

Make a shopping kit A reusable bag or two may not cut it to hold your big weekly stock-up. "When we go grocery shopping, we bring cloth bags for dried goods, mesh bags for produce and a pillowcase for our breads," Johnson says. A glass jar at the cheese counter nixes even the need for paper to wrap your *queso*.

Take a no-takeout vow Once paper or cardboard meets grease (hi, pizza box!), it can't be recycled. Neither can condiment packets or plastic utensils. Spend an hour each weekend making chili or a casserole, freeze it in glass containers and reheat for easy, inexpensive weeknight dinners. (Plus, people who cook most of their meals take in fewer calories, less sugar and less fat than those who eat out, finds new research from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.) If you do delivery, search dinegreen.com for a takeout spot with a Green Restaurant certification, given to eateries serious about waste reduction.

Pack a better lunch Opt for durable, long-lasting metal lunch boxes such as PlanetBox (from $35, planetbox.com). Juice boxes are tough to recycle, since they're often made from several materials fused together. If your kids plead for juice, buy it in a recyclable jug or juice your own, then pack it in an aluminum water bottle. And ditch the resealable (and unrecyclable!) plastic sandwich bags, which are so light they often get wind-swept into lakes and rivers. Lenches-Hinkel recommends washable Wrap-n-Mat ($9, wrapnmat.com) bags instead.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CLAIRE BENOIST; PROP STYLING: WENDY SCHELAH FOR HALLEY RESOURCES.

living room/bedroom

EASY TWEAKS

Choose durable furniture and clothing If you're redecorating or clothes shopping, pick pieces that won't wear out quickly, the EPA recommends—materials like wood, wool or leather trump flimsier synthetics.

Buy secondhand If your "new" top is simply new to you, you're discouraging manufacturers from churning out endless items each season (a huge waste of resources). Wearing previously owned duds doesn't have to mean compromising your style; take advantage of the recent surge in vintage e-shops, such as Covetique and 1stdibs.com. Buying secondhand is extra-vital for pieces you won't need for long, like baby clothes.

When in doubt, donate Don't be afraid to take even your shabbiest gear to Goodwill, says Seth Leitman of blog The Green Living Guy. If they can't sell your textiles, they will recycle them.

Stream your music and movies Calling all the last holdouts who prefer DVDs and CDs to streaming: Make Planet Earth your reason to step into the 21st century! Whatever's on that disc from Target, you can most likely find now on iTunes, Netflix or HBO On Demand.

Think multipurpose when you shop Slash how much you consume *and* save closet space by choosing clothing that bridges seasons. Rather than buying three jackets, for example, Johnson recommends the Patagonia Tres Down Parka: Wear it sans liner as a trench, don the liner-only as a puffy jacket or put it all together as a warm, waterproof coat ($529, patagonia.com).

Ask for experience gifts A babysitter for a night or a parasailing flight make for the best type of present, Johnson says. A study last year in *Psychological Science* confirmed that experiences boost people's bliss more than material items do.

GO-GREENER GOALS!

Give cloth diapers a try Kids go through 8,000 diapers before they're potty-trained, and each nappy takes approximately 550 years to break down in a landfill, according to the EPA. Boulden uses cloth diapers with cute designs during the day and unbleached diapers from Seventh Generation at night ($11, shop.seventhgeneration.com) for her 9-month-old baby, Sky. GroVia come in a range of patterns (from $16, gro-via.com). Or try gDiapers, a cotton line with inserts that are compostable or flushable ($18, gdiapers.com).

Skip that phone upgrade Of the estimated 1.8 billion phones bought in 2014, nearly half will likely be shoved to the back of a drawer by the end of this year, finds a report in *Chemical & Engineering News*. (A measly 3 percent get recycled!) Trade yours in, donate it—the Verizon Wireless HopeLine Program gives refurbished cell phones to domestic violence survivors—or pass on the upgrade to begin with.

YOUR NEW NO-WASTE FORMULA

Bea Johnson adds two tenets to the "reduce, reuse, recycle" triumvirate: refuse and rot.

REFUSE Create a free login with TrustediD (catalogchoice.org) to stop receiving junk mail. Skip business cards and swap info on your phone instead. Decline bottled water.

REDUCE Consider whether a purchase is truly necessary. Plastic forks for a picnic? Go the extra step and bring the real—washable—silverware.

REUSE About to toss something? Ponder how it could be repurposed—like turning T-shirts into dust rags.

RECYCLE Call your recycling center; some accept a wider range of items via drop-off.

ROT Compost in your yard or take compostable waste (everything from produce and egg shells to lawn trimmings, hair and lint) to a farmers market or community garden.



bathroom



EASY TWEAKS

Ditch the wipes and cotton balls It's dizzying to think about all the puffs, swabs and face wipes clogging landfills, especially when most can be replaced by something you already have: a washcloth. If the fabric is too rough on your skin, try a muslin cloth (two for $8, lizearle.com). Either way, launder after every three uses, according to *Consumer Reports*.

Upgrade your shave So you're not tossing a whole razor every time the blade gets dull, search Etsy for bamboo-handled safety razors that fit the interchangeable metal cartridges sold at drugstores. Extend any razor's life with a Blade Buddy sharpener ($20, amazon.com). "It makes a typical shaver last months versus weeks," Leitman says.

Say no to plastic applicators The average woman throws away between 250 and 300 pounds of pads and tampon applicators in her life, according to the book *Flow: The Cultural Story of Menstruation*. Opt for cardboard applicators over plastic, or, better yet, no applicator, such as Seventh Generation organic cotton applicator-less tampons ($6, seventhgeneration.com). For pads, try chlorine- and dye-free versions ($5, seventhgeneration.com). This summer, Jessica Alba's company, The Honest Co., will launch the world's first organic cotton tampon with a bioplastic applicator, plus a line of certified organic, hypoallergenic cotton pads.

Switch to economy-size shampoo bottles To save on plastic and cash, "keep refilling a smaller bottle from a big bottle you keep under your sink," Boulden says.

Choose bar soap over liquid Another chance to rid yourself of plastic: Buy soap in paperboard packaging, Lenches-Hinkel says.

GO-GREENER GOALS!

Have a less wasteful period Hear us out: Rathje recommends reusable silicone menstruation cups such as the DivaCup ($30, divacup.com). It works like a tampon except it collects blood (to rinse out later) instead of absorbing it. Major benefits include no leakage (it forms a seal inside you, kind of like a diaphragm), zero risk of toxic shock syndrome (you can wear one for up to 12 hours without changing it) and because of the seal, no odors. You can also try washable Lunapads ($12, lunapads.com).

Grab a hanky Nix Kleenex and go retro with a handkerchief; just use and chuck in the laundry. "They can make a statement if you get a funky pattern, and they save you money," Rathje says.

Make your beauty products multitask Johnson uses bar soap to wash her bod, shampoo and shave—also a smart, TSA-friendly space-saver when traveling. She also swears by pure cocoa powder (from the kitchen) as a bronzer. "I buy it in a cloth bag and fill a jar at home," she says. Shea butter moisturizer doubles as a hair smoother, Rathje adds. Try Sunfood ($30, amazon.com), which comes in a glass jar.

Brush better Opt for a wood- or bamboo-handled toothbrush with biodegradable bristles, such as the shaved boar bristles on Fuchs Pure Natural Bristle ($21 for five, amazon.com). Plus, try pure silk (read: compostable) Radius floss (from $3, Whole Foods stores), Rathje advises.

laundry room/broom closet

EASY TWEAKS

Buy concentrated cleaners If you tend to purchase cleaning products instead of making your own, choose those in concentrated form, so you use less at a time. One *Natural Health* editor has been working her way through a single bottle of Shaklee Basic H2 Organic Super Cleaning Concentrate ($12, shaklee.com) for six years!

Nix dryer sheets "Dryer sheets were designed to stop static in unnatural materials—so as you switch to natural fabrics, you won't need them," Rathje says. For synthetics you own, adding half a cup of white vinegar to the rinse cycle (don't worry, no smell) reduces static, she adds. Or, try a dryer ball, a reusable orb that bounces between your clothes as they dry, lifting and separating them and thus reducing static and wrinkles by allowing more hot air to circulate. "It cuts the drying time so you save energy, too," Leitman says. Shep's Wool Dryer Balls ($20 for four, wooldryerballs.com) are ideal since they're made from a renewable resource, or try the spiked rubber Dryer Max Dryer Ball ($10, amazon.com).

GO-GREENER GOALS!

Make your own cleaner Pantry items like white vinegar (a natural disinfectant), lemon juice, borax, baking soda and mild liquid soap, like castile, are good alternatives to packaged cleaning products. "We keep a bottle of vinegar mixed 50-50 with water in a reusable spray bottle under every sink," Boulden says. "When a countertop is grimy, spray, scrub with a washcloth and throw the rag in the hamper." If you're not fond of the vinegar smell (which disappears in seconds), add a few drops of essential oil. And you don't need different products to scrub every nook and cranny, she says. "I'm convinced next they'll be marketing a product that's meant to clean only your toilet handle!"

Pick old-school cleaning tools We know: Your Swiffer is hard to part with. But durable, reusable scrubbers like mops, rags and sponges beat disposables, the EPA advises. Rathje uses wood-handled brooms and wooden dustpans that "are so beautiful, I have them hanging on a wall," she says. The Brook Farm General Store (brookfarmgeneralstore.com) carries a range of pretty options made from materials like beech wood and horsehair. Talk about a clean sweep! ◆

THE PROBLEM WITH PLASTIC

Somewhere between the coasts of California and Japan, there's an environmental nightmare floating in the ocean: the Great Pacific Gyre, also known as the garbage patch or the Pacific trash vortex, a mass of debris that's twice the size of Texas and comprised predominantly of plastic bottles.

Shockingly, only around a quarter of 1 percent of the more than 7 billion pounds of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic that's discarded each year in the U.S. ends up being recycled. The rest, along with 90 percent of the world's PET plastic bottles (like the kind used for water or soda), makes its way to places like the garbage patch, typically via illegal dumping. Even when you pop plastic in a recycling bin, it can end up in a trash vortex (there are four others in the world's oceans), since overfilled U.S. recycling plants sometimes ship waste to countries where we have little control over it.

Plastic's future may be brighter, since more companies are starting to play with a biodegradable version called bioplastic, made from materials like corn. Some bioplastics are even compostable (check for the recycling logo with the number 7). But until manufacturers figure out how to make this new plastic sturdier, it likely won't become the norm. In the meantime, it's best to stick to glass, cardboard or metal.

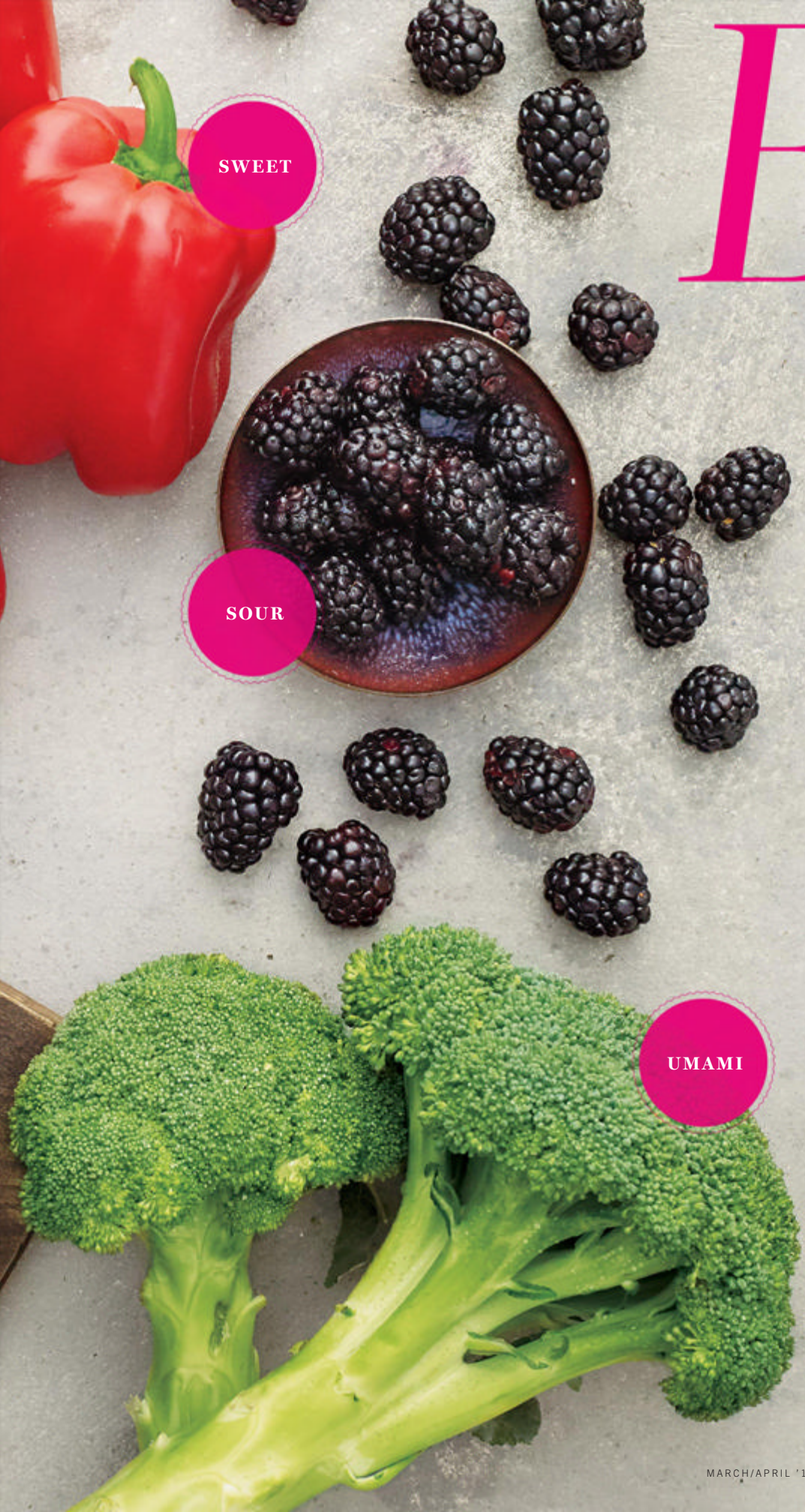


RETURN THE FLAVOR!

The delicious secret to a balanced, healthy diet: Hit every taste bud on your tongue.

BY MATTHEW KADEY, R.D.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TINA RUPP





Believe it or not, there was a time when hunting for dinner didn't mean browsing Seamless, or even finding a takeout menu and picking up the phone. It meant *real* hunting, a caveman's challenge that has shaped our diets for hundreds of thousands of years. Because our ancestors never knew when they'd enjoy their next bounty, they hoarded calories from fat and sugar when they could—and passed down that sweet-salty lust to us.

But the three less-sought-after tastes—bitter, sour and umami—are also vital for a healthy diet, says Alan Hirsch, M.D., director of the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago: "Expose yourself to a wider range of tastes, and you'll take in a wider range of nutrients."

The idea of a five-flavor diet is rooted in Ayurveda, a holistic practice that dates back to ancient India. But thanks to recent research, a focus on getting our daily sweet, sour, salty, bitter *and* umami is gaining momentum in the West. The payoff: Since many sour, bitter and umami-rich foods are low in calories, this way of eating may help you shed pounds, Hirsch says. In one study, adults with an aversion to bitter foods had a higher BMI than those who embraced the taste.

Think of this as an anti-diet—slimming down and ramping up your health not by counting calories and nutrients, but by adding diverse tastes and letting nature do the balancing act. Simply check off each taste at least once or twice a day, Hirsch says. Get started with these easy recipes, perfect for staying lean *and* satisfied.



SOUR

A sour sensation hits when your taste buds interact with acids in foods, such as the citric acid in lemon juice. Acids also deliver health perks: Ascorbic, found in citrus fruits, helps your body absorb more iron; malic acid in sour apples or cherries helps your body turn carbs into energy.

SOUR CHERRIES

TRY IT: Cherry-Farro Salad

Toss 2 cups cooked **farro**, chopped vegetables such as **carrots** and **celery**, ¼ cup sliced **almonds** and ⅓ cup diced **feta cheese** with 1 cup pitted and halved **sour cherries**. Dress with a **lemon vinaigrette**.

RHUBARB

TRY IT: Roasted Rhubarb

Cut several **rhubarb stalks** into 2-inch pieces and toss with ¼ cup **coconut sugar** and 2 tablespoons **orange blossom water**. Roast at 375° F for 30 minutes, or until tender. Serve over **oatmeal**.

KEFIR

TRY IT: Yogurt-Cucumber Soup

Blend 2 cups plain **kefir**, ½ pound **radishes**, 1 peeled **cucumber**, 1 **garlic clove**, 1 tablespoon **white wine vinegar**, ½ teaspoon **salt** and ¼ teaspoon **black pepper**. Stir in 2 sliced **scallions** and 2 tablespoons **dill**; chill for 2 hours and serve garnished with **olive oil**.

FOOD STYLING: EMMA FEIGENBAUM AT BIG LEO; PROP STYLING: KARIN OLSEN.

SALTY

Salt is vital for fluid balance, and helps muscles contract and relax. A more healthful way to work the savory taste into your diet: Swap out processed foods, like chips, for fermented, smoked or pickled items like miso or smoked salmon, or for "salty," low-sodium sea veggies like nori.

NORI

TRY IT: Salmon-Avocado Roll

Place ¼ cup cooked **brown rice**, 1 strip **smoked salmon**, 2 slices **avocado** and a drizzle of **sesame oil** on the bottom third of a **nori sheet**, rough side up, and roll tightly. Eat as a hand roll.

MISO

TRY IT: Miso-Lemon Sauce

Purée 1 cup **parsley**, ½ cup **basil**, 3 tablespoons **olive oil**, 1½ tablespoons **white miso**, juice and zest of 1 **lemon**, 2 **garlic cloves**, ¼ teaspoon **red pepper flakes**, and **salt** and **pepper** to taste. Serve over **whole-wheat pasta** or **grilled fish**.

ANCHOVIES

TRY IT: Tangy Kale Salad

Whisk ¼ cup **walnut oil**, 2 tablespoons **cider vinegar**, 3 chopped, **oil-packed anchovies**, 1 chopped **shallot**, 1 minced **garlic clove**, 2 teaspoons **orange zest** and ¼ teaspoon **black pepper**. Massage into 1 bunch chopped **kale** until tender.





SWEET

There's a reason we crave sweets: Not only are they a source of energy, but evolution has trained us to trust a sugary flavor as an indication that a food is safe to eat, as opposed to the sour taste of spoiled grub. Instead of taming your sweet tooth with cereals and cookies, seek out foods that deliver natural sugars, such as caramelized veggies and fresh fruit.

STRAWBERRIES

TRY IT: Berry-Honey Spread

Mix 3 tablespoons **chia seeds** with 1 cup **water**. Let sit for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, then pulse in a blender or food processor with 2 cups **strawberries** and 2 tablespoons **honey**. Chill overnight and use like jam.

CARROTS

TRY IT: Carrot-Curry Dip

Blend together ½ cup **carrot juice**, 2 peeled and chopped **carrots**, ½ cup raw **cashews**, ⅓ cup **dried apricots**, 1 teaspoon **curry powder** and ¼ teaspoon **salt**. Use as a dip for **crudités** or as your new favorite sandwich spread.

JICAMA

TRY IT: Jicama Fries

Peel and slice a **jicama** into ½-inch thick sticks. Toss with 2 teaspoons **olive oil** and 1½ teaspoons **Creole seasoning**; bake at 400° F for 35 minutes, or until golden.



BITTER

Bitter foods house compounds, such as the phytochemical naringin in grapefruit, that hit our taste buds with a gnarly edge. But even a few bites come with a lot of benefits, like helping digestion, finds a study in the *International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition*. Chowing on bitter eats may also help your body's absorption of vitamins A, D and E, and may fight damaging free radicals, too.

DANDELION GREENS

TRY IT: Spring Salad

Toss 2 cups **dandelion greens** with your favorite **vinaigrette** and top with halved **cherry tomatoes**, sautéed **asparagus**, sliced **almonds** and a poached **egg**.

GRAPEFRUIT

TRY IT: Spicy Grapefruit Salsa

Mix 1 peeled and chopped **grapefruit** with 1 diced **avocado**, ¼ cup chopped **mint**, 2 sliced **scallions**, 1 seeded and minced **serrano pepper** and **salt** to taste. Use as a salsa for **fish tacos**.

RAW COCOA POWDER

TRY IT: Chocolate-Date Truffles

Soak 1½ cups **pitted dates** in water for 30 minutes. Drain; pulse ¼ cup each **cocoa powder**, **flax powder** and **almond butter**, ½ teaspoon **salt**, zest of 1 **orange** and juice of ½ orange in a food processor until mixture clumps. Form into 1-inch balls and roll in extra cocoa.

why bitter is sweet

"Because most poisons taste bitter, all humans have an innate aversion to bitter foods," says Jennifer McLagan, author of the new book *Bitter: A Taste of the World's Most Dangerous Flavor, With Recipes*. But that means missing out on their ultra-stellar health benefits (see bottom left). McLagan offers these tips to become better at bitters.

1 Choose smart pairings
Mitigate some of the bite of green veggies by pairing them with a hint of salt or fat, such as sprinkling goat cheese over your bowl of Brussels sprouts.

2 Ease your way in
Start by adding just a few bitter leaves, such as escarole or radicchio, to your salad. Pile on more each day while cutting back on the sweeter iceberg or Boston lettuce. By the time you have a bowlful that's all bitter, you'll be used to—and will even enjoy!—the taste.

3 Savor the flavor
Take a bite of 70 percent or higher dark chocolate and let it melt in your mouth. Focus on bitter as a taste, not just a sensation, and remind yourself that, in its natural state, chocolate isn't sweet. You'll begin to appreciate the complexity sugar usually masks.



UMAMI

This so-called "fifth taste" generates a meaty, brothy or earthy sensation on your tongue, triggered by certain amino acids in food, such as the free glutamic acid that's released when veggies like mushrooms or broccoli ripen. Umami amplifies other flavors—pair it with naturally salty foods (p. 80) to satisfy cravings without extra help from the shaker.

SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS

TRY IT: Shiitake Pizza

Finely chop a few handfuls of **dried shiitakes** and sprinkle over your favorite **pizza**.

PARMESAN CHEESE

TRY IT: Crunchy Parmesan Chips

Mound 1 tablespoon **grated Parmesan** on a parchment-lined baking sheet; repeat until sheet is full. Bake at 350° F about 6 minutes. Let stand 20 minutes; use as a garnish for **soup**.

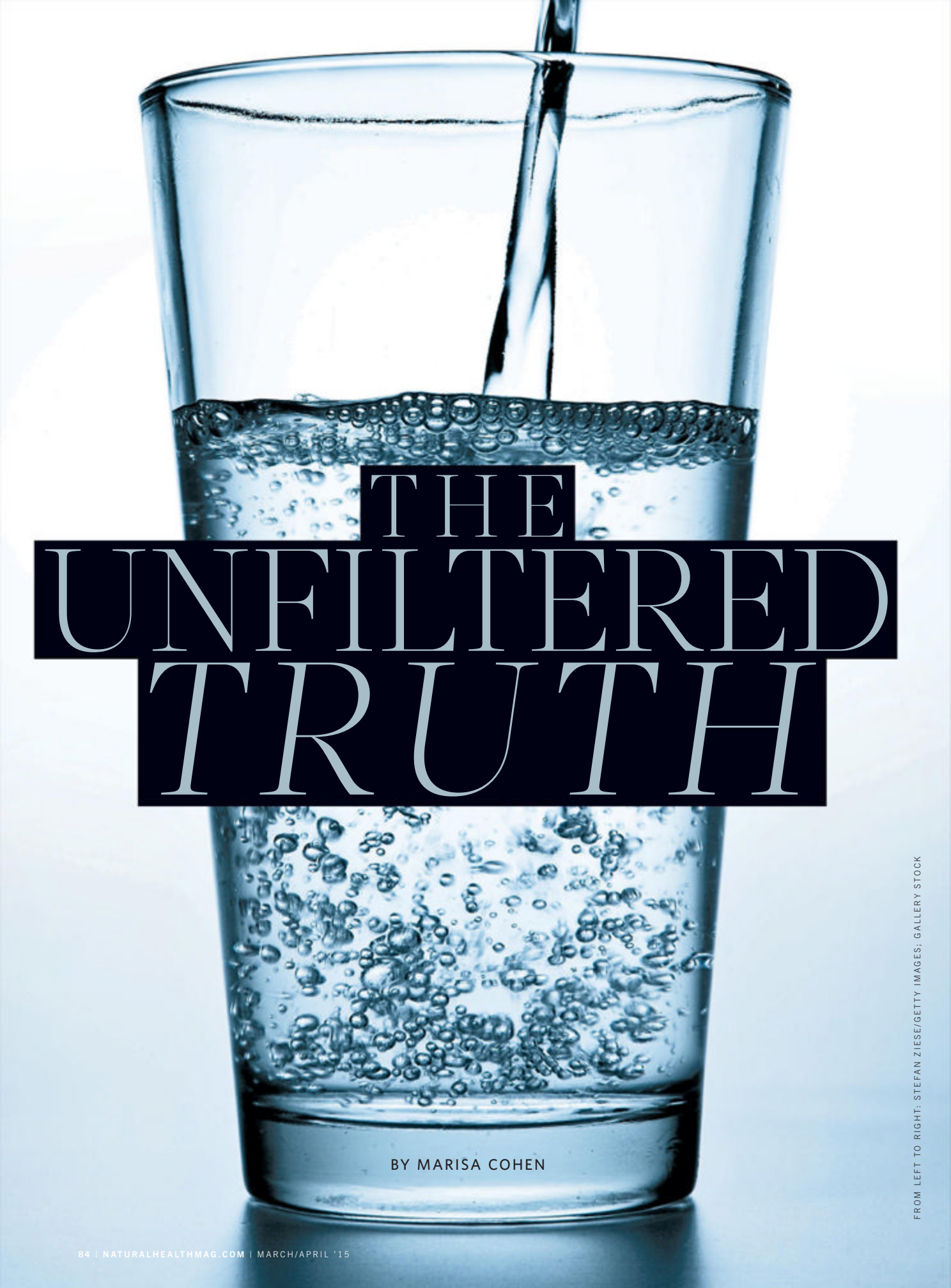
SUN-DRIED TOMATOES

TRY IT: Hearty Tomato Hummus

Blend 1 cup **chickpeas**, ½ cup **oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes**, 3 tablespoons **tahini**, 3 tablespoons **olive oil**, 2 **garlic cloves**, juice of ½ **lemon** and ¼ teaspoon **salt**.



GET MORE RECIPES! Log onto **naturalhealthmag.com/fiveflavor** for filling dinners that pack all five tastes into one sitting.



THE UNFILTERED TRUTH

BY MARISA COHEN

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: STEFAN ZIESE/GETTY IMAGES; GALLERY STOCK

Sure, worrying over the cleanliness of water in the U.S. sounds like a #firstworldproblem. And yet, cases of contamination in the drinking supply are reported every year. So how can you keep your favorite pick-me-up as pure as possible?



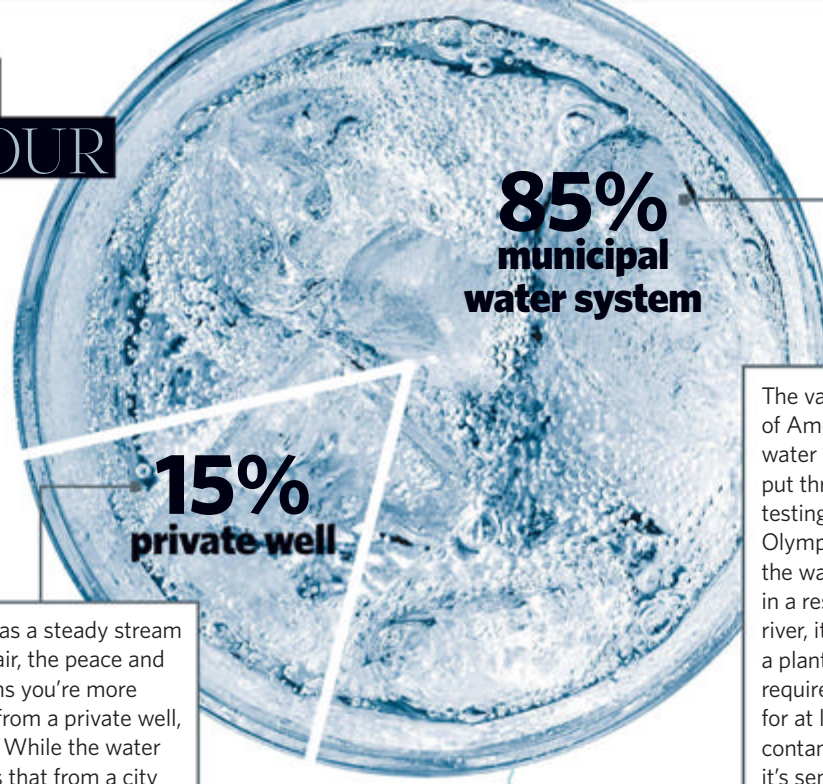
Chugging down a glass of water seems like the simplest way to support your well-being—no calories or additives, just a cool swig of liquid delight. "Water is the basis for all the fluids in your body," says Kim Larson, R.D.N., a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. "It regulates body temperature, moves food through your system and even helps with brain activity." In fact, to stay in primo health, most of us need about 91 ounces (sourced from both food and drinks) a day, according to the Institute of Medicine. But a growing number of Americans are asking what exactly is in the all-natural elixir flowing from their faucets: A recent survey by health-and-safety organization NSF International found that 82 percent of consumers are concerned about contaminants in their drinking water.

First, a refreshing splash of reassurance: American H_2O is among the world's cleanest. Congress passed the Safe Drinking Water Act in 1974, and it has been updated twice—you can drink from a spigot in any city in the country without risking a run to the ER, which is not the case globally, says Shane Snyder, Ph.D., professor of environmental science and public health at the University of Arizona. Still, Snyder says, there are reasons to be vigilant—particularly when it comes to industrial chemicals, which are developed at a rate the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) struggles to keep up with. They can seep into the water supply, especially if you live in an area where fracking (the process of blasting shale rock with a mix of water, sand and chemicals to release natural gas) occurs. Fortunately, there are low-cost and effective ways to test and filter your water. Here's how.



WHERE DOES YOUR WATER COME FROM?

The origins of your H_2O can impact the quality of what you're quaffing.



Living in a rural oasis has a steady stream of benefits—the fresh air, the peace and quiet—but it also means you're more likely to get your *agua* from a private well, which is not regulated. While the water may be just as clean as that from a city tap, it's up to you to test it every year.

I just moved to a home with a well. How do I know if what I'm drinking is safe? Have your water tested for pesticides, nitrates (especially if you're pregnant or have a baby), coliform bacteria, total dissolved solids, pH level (it should be between 6.5 and 8.5), organic chemicals and heavy metals. (Call your local health department to see if they can hook you up with free or low-cost testing services; you can also find a certified lab by calling the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791 or visiting wellowner.org.) Costs range from $5 (for individual tests like pH) to $250. Drink filtered or bottled H_2O until you get your water report (see below), which usually takes two or three days.

What if there's a problem? A certified ground-water contractor can discuss your options: You may want to replace old pipes, have your well disinfected or get a new one drilled to access cleaner water. You can also have a pro install a filter directly into your main to remove impurities before the liquid enters your home.

OK, it's clean. Now what? Drink up! But be sure to put an annual reminder on your calendar: "Time to repeat that water test." If anything weird comes up before your scheduled date—a funky smell, color or taste, stained laundry or you have unexplained gastrointestinal problems—then have your water evaluated ASAP.

The vast majority of Americans drink water that has been put through stricter testing than an Olympic athlete. After the water is collected in a reservoir, lake or river, it's purified in a plant and, per EPA requirements, tested for at least 91 different contaminants before it's sent through pipes to your home.

Ironically, water that flows to you beneath concrete instead of dripping bucolically from a babbling brook is even more likely to be safe. The EPA requires municipal water companies to test annually for harmful substances including bacteria, viruses, disinfectants and inorganic and organic chemicals. If the water exceeds the limits on any of those, the provider must warn residents and fix the problem. Suppliers are required to send you an annual report, called a Water Quality Report, Consumer Confidence Report or Drinking Water Quality Report (see below), by July 1 listing contaminant levels and disclosing violations. Though if you live in a small town, the report may be published online (Google your water system) or in the newspaper. If you accidentally tossed your report, just reach out to your water company and ask them to resend it.

DECODING YOUR WATER REPORT

We deciphered the main terms you're likely to see.

MCLG (Maximum contaminant level goal) This is a limit set by public health experts, below which there is no risk to human health (in fact, the MCLG is often zero). In a perfect world, your water would never go above this level.

MCL (Maximum contaminant level) Alas, we don't live in a perfect world. So this number—the highest amount legally allowed by the EPA—is often above the more idealistic MCLG.

Highest/Range Here's what was actually dripping from your faucet over the past year. If the number is below the MCL (meaning no action was required) but above the more stringent MCLG, consider using a filter for extra protection.

Description/Sources of Contaminants How the heck did that trace amount of arsenic wind up in your water? This section tells you (it could be erosion from natural deposits or runoff from mines, factories or orchards, for example).

ANTHONY BRADSHAW/GETTY IMAGES

WHAT ARE THEY TESTING FOR?

Microorganisms If you get water from your municipal system, your company first looks to eliminate bacteria and viruses like legionella and E. coli, which can cause gastrointestinal troubles and illnesses if ingested. Between 2009 and 2010, there were just 33 reported outbreaks of water-borne illnesses from bacteria—almost all the result of drinking unregulated well water.

Disinfectants Providers kill off those icky germs with chemicals like chlorine, chloramine and chlorine dioxide. Too much of these substances can cause eye and nose irritation, stomach problems and anemia. Municipal water providers must keep them in check. If you've had your well disinfected, you too may find them in your supply.

Disinfectant by-products While disinfectants themselves don't generally cause serious sicknesses, they can react chemically with rotting organic matter to form by-products such as trihalomethanes, which have been linked to bladder cancer, liver and kidney disorders.

Chemicals The rest of the list reads like a chemistry textbook, including everything from asbestos (which can come from decaying cement in water mains) to fluoride (added to many water supplies to keep children's teeth healthy) to tetrachloroethylene (a by-product of dry cleaning).

ARE MY PIPES THE ISSUE?

If your house was built before 1986, consider having your water tested after it comes out of your tap. Even H_2O that leaves the plant clean and clear can pick up contaminants from old plumbing (which can leach iron, lead, copper and zinc). A test can cost between $20 and $100. Find a certified lab by calling the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791, then talk to a plumber about updating the fixtures in your home. Go to DrinkTap.org for more info.

SHOULD I GET A WATER FILTER?

If you drink well water or you're concerned about the chemicals that *haven't* made it onto the EPA's checklist yet, you may want to filter what you're sipping, says Emily Wurth, water program director for the advocacy group Food & Water Watch. Filters can be in pitchers, attached to your faucet or under your sink, or installed at point-of-entry, which can be expensive but purifies all liquids pulsing through your pipes, including showers and dishwashers. Check out the Environmental Working Group's Water Filter Buying Guide (search "water filter guide" at ewg.org). Here are your two main options.

Carbon filters These go in a water pitcher or attach to your tap. The carbon chemically bonds with contaminants and removes them—it works well for chlorine and may remove asbestos, lead, trihalomethanes and some pesticides, but leaves in fluoride and nitrates.

Reverse osmosis filters These work via a semipermeable membrane that retains any particles larger than a water molecule. They can remove many contaminants that carbon can't, including hexavalent chromium (the cancer-causing toxin you may remember from *Erin Brockovich*), nitrates and perchlorate. Since these don't work on chlorine or volatile organic compounds, look for a model with a carbon pre-filter for double action.



ERIK HAGMAN/GALLERY STOCK

IS BOTTLED WATER BETTER?

Chances are, water you purchase is no different from what comes out of your kitchen sink, and may not even be as stringently tested. While tap water is regulated by the EPA, anything in a jug is overseen by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which considers it low-risk. "If you live in a populated area, it's likely that the fluid in your tap has gone through more testing than bottled water," Wurth says. Companies that scored highest on the Environmental Working Group's bottled-water scorecard for including data about sources and testing include Gerber Pure Purified Water, Nestle Pure Life Purified Water and Penta Ultra-Purified Water.

make one change

A tweak to jump-start your better life



LEAVE YOUR COMFORT ZONE

The 10-minute secret to taking a life-changing leap

All the Practical Peggys in the room, please stand up—and think about the last "sensible" decision you made. Were you *really* too busy to sign up for that hip-hop class ... or were you nervous you'd be a terrible dancer? "People use 'I'm just being reasonable' as an excuse not to face their fears, ignoring the good that comes from taking a chance," says career coach Tama Kieves, author of *A Year Without Fear*.

Fortunately, there's an easy way to call on your *cojones* (you have them, trust us!) when facing an opportunity that deep down, you want to say yes to. Follow this three-step plan to find the bliss in a little risky business.

Spell out your fears

Sit down solo and think beyond the practical reasons to say no to the life leap (big or small) that has piqued your interest. Putting aside the hassle of apartment hunting, is something else stopping you from trying out a new city? Are you afraid you won't make friends? Worried about adjusting to a new workplace? Write down everything you're scared of, Kieves says—seeing your fears on paper makes them hard to ignore.

Channel a new narrator

Stories change depending on who's telling them, as anyone who's been caught between arguing pals knows. Hop in a mental time-machine and tell the *end* of your own intrepid tale from the voice of your future self—"someone who has already taken the class or moved to the new city, who's got it in the bag," Kieves says. "A friend was hesitant to go on a wellness retreat because she wouldn't know anyone. I told her, 'Imagine what you'd say after the experience. Who did you meet? What did you learn? How did it change your life?'" She pictured herself with friends who shared her zeal for healthy living (and then went and met them!).

Have a serious conversation—with yourself

It may sound silly, but for your gutsy side to take shape, you need to have a talk—out loud—with that future you, a process Kieves calls inspired self dialogue. "It will feel awkward at first," she warns, "but fake it till you make it." Say out loud, 'What if I pass out during the marathon?' Then switch to the narrator who has crossed the finish line; she'll tell you how distance running has helped her gain discipline, confidence and a healthier body. Pretty soon, you'll be mega-inspired by the bolder version of you—just the boost you need to take that risk and never look back.

RHEA ANNA/GALLERY STOCK

BY MARISSA CONRAD

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Q What is the best time of day to meditate?

A You already know that mindfulness reaps major benefits, but if you're trying to decide when to pencil it into a busy schedule, aim for the beginning or end of your day, ideally between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. (if you're a morning person) or 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. (if you're more of a night owl). "These are the times of day when your mind becomes more open to settling down and focusing—what we call the '*vata* state' in Ayurveda," says Cooper Chou, a certified Ayurveda practitioner and yoga instructor at New York Health & Racquet Club in New York City. Each time frame has its benefits: Morning meditation helps you focus and sets you on a path for an energized and productive workday, while om-ing before bed helps you turn off your brain and achieve a deeper, more sound sleep.

Once you begin your practice, start by meditating for only five to 10 minutes at a stretch, advises Janet Nima Taylor, author of *Meditation for Non-Meditators: Learn to Meditate in Five Minutes*. An app, like Headspace, can help. If finding a quiet corner in your home presents a challenge, Taylor suggests setting a five-minute timer on your phone and sitting in your car while focusing on your breath before zipping off to the office—or right before you come through the door after a

NaturalHealth

Reader Survey

We want to hear from you! Complete this survey and return it to us at Natural Health Survey, Attn: DF, 4 New York Plaza, 2nd floor, New York, NY 10004, or take it online at *naturalhealthmag.com/2015issuesurvey*. We'll randomly choose one reader's name from the completed surveys to receive a **$250 American Express gift card**. Five others will receive **$50 gift cards**.

1. How do you usually obtain a copy of *Natural Health*?
- a Subscribe
- b Buy it at a store or newsstand
- c Other

2. If you buy *Natural Health* at a store or newsstand, where are you buying it?
- a Whole Foods or other natural foods store
- b Walgreens, CVS or other drugstore
- c Bookstore
- d Other

3. If you buy *Natural Health* at a store or newsstand, are you buying it more frequently than you did last year?
- a Yes
- b No

4. At $4.99, do you think *Natural Health* is a good value?
- a Yes
- b No

5. Would you buy *Natural Health* if you were not interested in the celebrity on the cover?
- a Yes
- b No

6. Please indicate your favorite section/department.
- a Stay Healthy (health, nutrition and fitness)
- b Home & Away (travel, home and lifestyle)
- c Your Style (beauty and fashion)
- d Good Food (recipes and cooking tips)

7. Based on your selection, would you like to see more of this content in the magazine?
- a Yes
- b No

8. Which of the following websites do you visit on a regular basis?
- a CookingLight.com
- b DrOzTheGoodLife.com
- c Fitbie.com
- d Greatist.com
- e Health.com
- f WellandGood.com
- g VegetarianTimes.com
- h YogaJournal.com

9. How often do you visit NaturalHealthMag.com?
- a Every day
- b At least once a week
- c At least once a month
- d Less than once a month
- e Never

10. How many supplements (including vitamins, herbs and other supplements) do you take per day?
- a None
- b 1 to 3
- c 4 to 7
- d More than 7

11. Which of the following magazines do you also buy?
- a *Cooking Light*
- b *Dr. Oz: The Good Life*
- c *Health*
- d *Prevention*
- e *Vegetarian Times*
- f *Yoga Journal*

12. What age range do you fall in?
- a Under 18
- b 18 to 20
- c 21 to 24
- d 25 to 34
- e 35 to 44
- f 45 to 54
- g 55 to 64
- h 65 or older

13. Which best describes the total combined annual income for all working members of your household?
- a Under $25,000
- b $25,000 to $34,999
- c $35,000 to $49,999
- d $50,000 to $74,999
- e $75,000 to $99,999
- f $100,000 to $124,999
- g $125,000 to $149,999
- h $150,000 or more

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full day of work. Even a few minutes of peaceful breathing on the go can give you lasting brain benefits.

—T.K. BRADY

Q My cat is sick. Can I catch what he's got?

A When Precious is under the weather, your first priority naturally will be keeping him comfortable and nursing him back to health. But exercise caution when you're coddling him, recommends Edward Dubovi, Ph.D., direct or of virology at the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine in Ithaca, N.Y. Catching a disease from your pet isn't common, but it's definitely possible, he says. Certain infections, particularly salmonella and giardia, could spread from a cat or dog if you come into contact with a sick pet's infected bodily fluids and then touch your nose or mouth, he notes. If your pet is exhibiting signs of illness like diarrhea or vomiting, take the same precautions you would if a human in your house were sick: Wash your hands regularly and clean his most frequented areas (crate, bed, food and water bowls) thoroughly.

Humans can also spread certain illnesses, like the flu, to pets. (Again, Dubovi emphasizes that such cases are rare, but there have been documented incidences.) If you're ill, wash your hands before and after you touch your pet or his belongings, and resist the urge to cuddle him close. He'll thank you later!

—EMILY C. JOHNSON

Q Should I be worried about germs on the mats at my yoga studio?

A It's a challenge to achieve a truly Zen state of mind in Child's Pose when you're thinking about all the creepy-crawlies that could be lurking on a communal yoga mat, and there is reason to be cautious. Bacteria and fungi can fester on unwashed mats, and since many studios go one month (or even longer!) without cleaning their stash, you could wind up with molluscum (an itchy, wart-like rash) or athlete's foot just from coming into contact with the gunk that another student has left behind. "Fungi and bacteria flourish in warm, moist areas, so if mats are not completely

SHAINA FISHMAN

aired out after sweat has landed on them, they become ideal hosts for infection," says Whitney Bowe, M.D., a dermatologist in Briarcliff Manor, N.Y. and New York City.

Toting your own gear to class is the best way to prevent contagion (keep it clean by rubbing with a disinfecting wipe and airing your stuff out as soon as you get home from class). But if you'd rather travel light, you still have options. First, the obvious: Pay attention to how your studio collects used mats after a session. Do you toss your sweat-soaked one back into the same pile where you found it? Then unfortunately, it's probably not getting washed very often. Separate pickup and drop-off sections are indicators of a more organized—and hygienic—cleaning system. Some studios provide disinfectant and rags for you to wipe down the mat yourself, but that's effective only if the rags are washed every day. If you suspect your studio is slacking with their sudsing, call them out—nicely. A polite inquiry from a regular customer may be the prompting they need to make hygiene a higher priority, says Tiffany Cruikshank, a yoga instructor in Los Angeles and founder of Yoga Medicine.



If even a friendly nudge gets you nowhere, try Cruikshank's recipe for a homemade sanitizing solution that you can pop into a travel-size spray bottle and bring along with you to class: Mix 1 cup of distilled water with ¼ cup of vinegar, 15 drops of tea tree oil and 10 drops of lavender oil. If DIY isn't for you, Cruikshank recommends Manduka Mat Restore Yoga Spray ($10, manduka.com). Simply mist your entire mat with either solution, then wipe off with a fresh cloth or paper towel before and after each class. Happy posing!

—JACQUIE ITSINES

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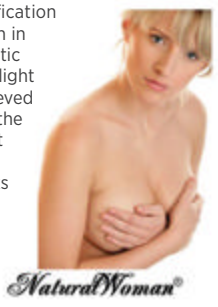
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